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# THE SO-CALLED RULE OF THREE ACTORS IN THE CLASSICAL GREEK DRAMA

A DISSERTATION

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF ARTS  
AND LITERATURE IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE  
OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

(DEPARTMENT OF GREEK)

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BY  
KELLEY REES

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Published February 1908

Composed and Printed By  
The University of Chicago Press  
Chicago, Illinois, U. S. A.

## PREFACE

I take this occasion to acknowledge my debt to Professor Edward Capps, late of the University of Chicago, now of Princeton University, for invaluable assistance in the composition of this treatise. It was at his suggestion that I undertook the investigation, and he has been my constant advisor and critic throughout. It also gives me much pleasure in this connection to express my gratitude to other former instructors, Professors Shorey, Hale, and Hendrickson of the University of Chicago, Professor Walter Miller of Tulane University, and especially Professors Murray and Fairclough of Stanford University, who encouraged me to pursue further classical studies. In Germany it was my privilege to study under Professors Blass, Dittenberger, Wissowa, and Robert. Professor Robert especially, with whom was the greater part of my work, I have to thank not only for his stimulating lectures, but for the personal interest he manifested in my welfare as well.

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JOHN H. REES



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
<b>I. INTRODUCTION . . . . .</b>	9
The Meaning of the "Three-Actor Law," as Formulated by Modern Scholars . . . . .	9
History of Its Growth and Development up to the Present Time . . . . .	11
The Same Evidence for Comedy as for Tragedy . . . . .	16
The Possibility of a Misunderstanding as to the Real Significance of the "Law" . . . . .	17
<b>II. THE EVIDENCE FOR THE SO-CALLED LAW OF THREE ACTORS . . . . .</b>	18
1. <i>Νεμήσεις ὑποκριτῶν</i> . . . . .	18
2. Aristotle and Horace the Basis for the Aesthetic Law . . . . .	21
3. Would the "Law" Have Been a Natural Outgrowth of the Economic Conditions under Which the Drama Developed? . . . . .	26
4. Evidence Based on the Terms Protagonist, Deuteronagonist, and Tritagonist . . . . .	31
<b>III. A DISTINCTION BETWEEN THE AESTHETIC CANON OF ARISTOTLE AND ECONOMIC CONDITIONS WHICH DETERMINE THE NUMBER OF PERSONS EMPLOYED AS ACTORS IN A PLAY . . . . .</b>	40
<b>IV. OBJECTIONS TO THE LAW AS USUALLY APPLIED . . . . .</b>	42
A. Sometimes More Than Three Actors Are Required . . . . .	42
B. Four Actors Are Necessary; Otherwise Split Rôles . . . . .	45
C. Parts Are Overloaded . . . . .	48
D. Awkward Situations Caused by a "Lightning" Change of Dress . . . . .	50
E. Bad Assignment of Rôles . . . . .	53
1. Important Male and Female Rôles Must Be Doubled . . . . .	55
2. Parts of Messengers, Guards, and Servants Are Combined with Those of Princesses and Other Female Rôles of Delicate and Refined Type . . . . .	57
3. Youth and Old Age Are Disregarded in the Assignment of Parts. The Rôles Are Also Very Often of a Different Sex, Which Renders Such Combinations Even More Inappropriate . . . . .	57
4. Other Unsuitable and Miscellaneous Rôles Must Be Doubled . . . . .	58
F. It Assumes That the State Set a Limit to Its Own Expenditures or to the Demands Which Could Be Made upon the Choregus . . . . .	60

	PAGE
V. THE EXISTENCE OF A PRACTICAL THREE-ACTOR RULE IN THE PERIOD OF THE GUILDS . . . . .	64
The Economic Conditions at Athens Contrasted with the Conditions under Which the Traveling Companies Produced Plays . . . . .	64
The Effect of Economic Conditions upon Dramatic Production . . . . .	66
The Evidence for the Practice of Using Three Actors in the Post-Classical Period . . . . .	69
An Illustration Drawn from Dramatic Performances in the Elizabethan Period . . . . .	71
VI. A REDISTRIBUTION OF THE RÔLES IN SELECTED PLAYS . . . . .	75



## I. INTRODUCTION

One of the most striking peculiarities commonly attributed to the Greek drama in the matter of presentation is the alleged employment of only three speaking actors. The custom began, we are told, with the introduction of a third actor by Sophocles. Before that event tragic poets were limited to an even smaller number. Aeschylus was allowed two performers for the *Suppliants*, *Persians*, and *Septem*, while Thespis, the traditional inventor of tragedy, never employed more than one. The same limitation applied to comedy also, but through a different process of development: whereas in tragedy there was a gradual increase from one actor to three, in comedy there was apparently a reduction from a larger number to three.<sup>1</sup> This innovation of Cratinus happened not long after the introduction of

<sup>1</sup> Tzetzes *De com.* (Kaibel, pp. 17 ff.), whose statement seems to imply that Cratinus restricted the number of actors in comedy to three; before his time *ἀταξία*. Aristotle acknowledges his inability to trace certain stages in the early development of comedy, yet his words, *Poetics* 1449 b 5, imply, according to most interpreters, that the philosopher conceived of comedy as having passed through the same process as tragedy, with one, then two and three actors; see Susemihl *Rev. de phil.* XIX (1895), pp. 199 ff.; Kaibel *Hermes* XXIV (1889), p. 64; Poppelreuter *De com. Att. primordiis*, p. 28 (Berlin, 1893); Beer *Zahl d. Schauspieler*, pp. 17 ff. These scholars, however, have found difficulty with the statement of Tzetzes about Cratinus: *κατέστησε μὲν πρῶτον τὰ ἐν τῇ κωμῳδίᾳ πρόσωπα μέχρι τριών, στήσας ἀταξίαν, κτλ.* Beer (p. 17) thought that the number of regular actors was never reduced, but that Cratinus did away with "parachoregemata," leaving only three actors. The fact that Aristophanes later frequently employed four or five actors is against this. Susemihl (p. 202) regards the theory about Cratinus as a mere mistake, due to this process of reasoning: The oldest comedy that survived was the work of Cratinus; it used three actors, as do most of his other plays. Hence Cratinus was the author of the innovation. Cf. also Poppelreuter, pp. 28 ff. But the essential difference in the structure of comedy and tragedy is evidence for a different process of development for each. See Zielinski *Gliederung d. altatt. Kom.* (Leipzig, 1885). The passage in Tzetzes is also against the theory of a like process for both, and can best be explained on the assumption that the number of performers underwent a gradual decrease from a larger to a smaller number. Under no other supposition can its development from the *κῶμος* be understood in the opinion of Capps *Introd. of Com. into City Dion.*, p. 11, n. 36. After the state's recognition of comedy, 487/6 B. C., there was a constant effort on the part of comic poets to make comedy conform to the artistic norms of tragedy. Cratinus took one decided step in this direction by reducing the number of performers that could be on the scene at the same time.

the third actor by Sophocles. From this time on throughout the entire classical period three actors remained the regular number assigned by the state for the presentation of all plays, both tragic and comic. These three actors, protagonist, deuteragonist, and tritagonist, were able by the doubling of parts to impersonate all the characters of the play.

Such is the three-actor law as it is commonly understood at the present time. No one, so far as I know, has questioned its validity, though the difficulties encountered in its application to single plays are not lacking, as the conflicting views on matters of detailed interpretation will show.

The law as described above is stated by Müller *Bühnenallt.* (1886), p. 173; Haigh *Attic Theatre* (1898), pp. 252, 253. The latter says: "This number [3] was never exceeded, either in comedy or tragedy. All extant Greek plays could be performed by three actors." Navarre *Dionysos*, pp. 216 ff., says that, with the exception of the four earliest plays of Aeschylus, "toutes les tragédies subsistantes réclament trois acteurs. Jamais ce nombre ne fut dépassé." That the same law applied to comedy after it became a state institution is the accepted opinion—Bergk *Gesch. d. griech. Litt.* III (1884), p. 83: "Mit dieser geringen Zahl [3] der Schauspieler hat sich im Allgemeinen das griechische Drama begnügt," p. 84: "Für die Komödien gelten die gleichen Ordnungen;" Croiset *Hist. de la litt. gr.* III<sup>2</sup> (1899), p. 83: "Ce nombre de trois acteurs est resté le normal pour toute la période classique, à partir des débuts de Sophocle en 468," adding (p. 492) that comedy became subject to the same limitation; K. O. Müller *Gesch. griech. Litt.* I<sup>4</sup> (1882), p. 510: "Sophokles und Euripides haben sich immer mit diesen drei Schauspielern begnügt," excepting however, *Oedipus Coloneus*, for which he holds a fourth actor necessary. In comedy he finds (II<sup>4</sup>, p. 13) that the rule of three was not strictly observed. The editors adhere to the interpretation of the law as above formulated. Jebb never admits a fourth actor. Wecklein divides the parts in the *Prometheus* between two actors (Einl., p. 55), but after Sophocles a third performer was allowed (*Medea*, Einl., p. 31). Hayley (*Alcestis*, p. 50) calls attention to the impropriety of the same actor playing parts so widely different as Heracles and Alcestis, but does not question the rule; Teuffel-Kähler (*Clouds*, p. 51) divide the rôles of this play among three actors. Blaydes accepts the rule for Aristophanes; but for the *Wasps* he says (p. 7): "In hac fabula quattuor interdum personae simul inducuntur." Van Leeuwen has made a division of the parts in the plays of Aristophanes, using three actors as far as possible, but admitting a fourth when occasion demands: in the *Clouds* a fourth actor must play either the Just or the Unjust Orator; with three actors this play could not have been performed.

However, he does not attack the rule in its application to comedy in general.<sup>1</sup> Wilamowitz *Heracles* I', pp. 380 ff., distributes the parts in the *Oresteia* to illustrate how the poet strove to equalize the burden upon the actors. He acknowledges, however, that this principle is seldom, if ever, observed.<sup>2</sup>

It is unnecessary to add more names to this list. Scholars of the present time are agreed that the Athenian state during the classical period allowed to poets for the presentation of plays only three actors, among whom all the parts of the plays were distributed. This peculiar feature of the Greek stage was recognized, apparently, as far back as the records of modern scholarship extend. Tyrwhitt on Aristotle's *Poetics*, sec. x, p. 118 (1794), called attention to the "rule," and was the first scholar, to my knowledge, to bring together the material. He made no attempt to apply the law to the extant plays. Starting with statements of late Greek writers, such as Pollux, Lucian, and the scholiasts (*infra*, p. 70), which I hope to show had reference to the economic conditions of the post-classical period, he uses them to illustrate Aristotle's summary of the early history of Attic tragedy, in which the philosopher certainly had in mind, not the practical conditions which the stage-manager had to meet, but merely the aesthetic conditions of tragedy as an art-form—Attic tragedy as viewed by the spectator, not by one who stood behind the scenes. Tyrwhitt simply followed the practice of all scholars of his time in the matter of antiquities, using as evidence for the classical period any statement that was found in a writer of Greek, even if seven or ten centuries later. It was not until the nineteenth century that the more discriminating historical method of using evidence was consistently applied to Greek antiquities, and the task of freeing ourselves from the shackles of a tradition based on such uncritical methods has even now not been fully completed.

But let us proceed to trace the rule of three actors from Tyrwhitt to the present time. Böttiger *De actoribus prim. sec. et tert. partium in fab. Graec.* (Weimar, 1797) discusses the titles of the three actors and the significance of the same with reference to the parts played by each. The leading actor, protagonist, played "partes primas," and the second actor or deuteragonist, next to the protagonist in importance, played "partes

<sup>1</sup> Van Leeuwen's note *Nub. Praef.*, p. 2, n. 1, reads almost like a protest against the law.

<sup>2</sup> In *Hermes* XXXII (1897), p. 386, note, he sets up the theory that specially qualified singers, who were not actors, were employed for certain song-parts (e. g., the two sisters in the *Septem*, the children in the *Alcestis*, *Andromache*, and *Suppliants* [Eur.], and the Phrygian in the *Orestes*). In this way he relieves certain parts that are unequally and incongruously combined in the ordinary distribution.—There is much force in his arguments, but they run counter to the three-actor "law."

secundas," while the poorest actor of the three, the tritagonist, played "partes tertias." The distinction between the class of the actors and the rôles they played was rigorously observed. The protagonist was never allowed to play "partes tertias," nor the tritagonist "partes primas." Böttiger does not distribute the parts in any of the plays. His use of the terms "primae, secundae, et tertiae partes" as applied to Greek plays adds an element of confusion. Properly speaking there is but one first, second, or third part in a play. We cannot find in the plays a group of characters which might be called first, second, and third respectively, apart from the actors that must play them as the arrangement of the play demands. When two characters have an equal influence upon the leading persons, or play equally important parts in the drama, these characters rarely fall to the same actor (*infra*, p. 36). But the "rule of three actors" was well established by the beginning of the nineteenth century, as Böttiger's article shows. It was a dogma built, as it was believed, upon Aristotle and supported apparently by late writers without reference to the plays themselves or the conditions under which plays were produced in the fifth century. Confirmation was found in the non-existence of a special name for the "actor of fourth parts." Scholars next turned to the plays. They began to detect the influence of this restriction upon the inner economy of the drama. Characters come and go, not because the poet chooses to have them do so, but because the limitation in the number of available actors requires it. The motive for the exit of a person is that the actor is needed for another person who is soon to appear. Elmsley finds the real reason for the departure of Aethra in Eur. *Heracleid.* 539 to be that the actor who had hitherto played the part of Aethra is now wanted for the part of the Herald. In the earliest plays of Euripides<sup>1</sup> Elmsley discovers that the contrivances which are "adopted in other plays to render a fourth actor unnecessary are applied to the exclusion of a third. At the end of the *Alcestis*, Alcestis observes a strange and obstinate silence. The poet attempts to assign a reason for her silence (1147), but the true reason was "that the actor who wore the robe and mask of Alcestis at the beginning of the play is now present in the character of Heracles."

How is the rule to be applied? How are the parts in the extant plays to be distributed among three actors, and what parts in the single plays

<sup>1</sup> *Alcestis* and *Medea*, though the "third actor" had been introduced *ca.* 30 years before. The introduction of a child in these two plays is thought by Elmsley to have excluded the employment of a third actor for adult characters. However, in the *Andromache* children did not seem to come within the rigor of the law. Here Molossus is upon the scene with three other persons; see *Class. Jour.* VIII (1813), pp. 435 ff.

did the protagonist, deuteragonist, and tritagonist take? These are questions that have elicited much discussion. Scholars have attempted to find the answer by different methods. The first one to undertake this task in a comprehensive way, distributing the rôles in all the tragedies, was Lachmann *De mensura tragiciarum* (Berlin, 1822). His method was unique. The division of single parts by the number seven is the deciding element for the grouping of single parts for particular actors—all dialogue parts when added together make a number of *ρήσεις* that is divisible by seven. In the three-actor period that part (or those parts) which make up the “*numerus justus*” shows us the protagonist. The parts of the deuteragonist and tritagonist taken together contain a number of verses or *ρήσεις* divisible by seven; but there is no sure method of determining which parts are second and which are third. Lachmann’s book, with its artificial and unreasonable mechanical method, did not evoke favorable criticism.<sup>1</sup> He was forced to assume corruption of texts, which he freely emended, to make absurd distributions of the rôles, and often to resort to the employment of an additional performer.<sup>2</sup>

The epoch-making work<sup>3</sup> on the distribution of parts is C. F. Hermann’s *De distr. pers. in trag. Graec.* (Marburg, 1840). Hermann’s results are generally accepted in modern handbooks and editions. Accepting as an established fact that the state provided only three actors, which accordingly limited to three the number of speaking characters in any scene, Hermann looked thus at the practical problem which confronted the poet in composing his drama: If he employ a large number of characters, he must see to it that not more than three shall appear at the same time, and must provide a plausible pretext for the departure of a character from the scene when the actor who carries this rôle is required to impersonate another character in the following scene. Hermann has endeavored to show by an examination of the plays that the poets solved this problem in a most clever and artistic manner. The motive for the departure of a character is worked in with such a degree of naturalness and plausibility “*ut re ipsa potius quam externa necessitate omnia moveri videantur*,” but in reality the character leaves the scene at a particular time that the actor may come

<sup>1</sup> Cf. the theory recently propounded by Oeri *Die grosse Responsor in d. spät. Soph. Trag. im Kykl. u. in d. Herakleiden* (Berlin, 1880), whose arguments have been thoroughly refuted by Zielinski *Gliederung*, p. 387.

<sup>2</sup> E. g., in all the plays of Euripides except *Alcestis*, *Heracleidae*, *Ion*, and *Heracles*.

<sup>3</sup> The law is also stated by Schneider *Att. Theaterwesen*, pp. 13 ff., 131 ff. (Weimar, 1835), who divides the rôles in a few plays of Aeschylus, and collects in his “*Quellen*” the notices which prove the “law.” O. Müller *Eumenides*, p. 110, divided the rôles in the *Orestiea* in the usual way.

on in the next scene as another person. This restriction in the number of actors did not render the presentation of a drama less effective. The emotions of the spectator would be deeply aroused by the very fact that the same actor who had before worn the mask of Antigone was now present as Teiresias, “qui quum Creonti poenam pro illius suppicio patiendam vaticinetur et ipse tanquam ulti atque alastor ejus prodire videtur.” The effect would be heightened still more when the spectator saw the same actor, who earlier in the play had been led forth to the tomb in the character of Antigone, return in the character of a Messenger to relate her death. Though the mask and dress were changed, the same voice and stature were perceptible in both, so that the spectator would feel that the ghost of Antigone was speaking through the mask of the Messenger. In view of the dramatic effect thus attained, Hermann consistently has the same actor play the part of Messenger that had before played the part of the person whose death he announces.

Few would now concede that the Greeks employed such a principle for dramatic effect—the production of tragic irony by a means which would destroy the dramatic illusion. If the economy of the play in the conventional distribution of the rôles forced the same actor to impersonate Antigone, Teiresias, and Messenger, the actor certainly strove to adapt his voice and manner to the person whose mask he was, for the time being, wearing. Any other assumption is as much as to say that the Greek playwright did not seek to create a perfect illusion, but rather to impress upon the spectator the clumsiness of the histrionic art by which two incongruous rôles were carried by the same actor. In the distribution of the rôles Hermann assigns to the protagonist the most difficult part, to the deuteragonist and tritagonist parts of less importance. Female rôles in his scheme usually fall to the deuteragonist; the tritagonist plays rôles of a miscellaneous nature, including kings and tyrants. In the grouping of several rôles for the same actor Hermann thus formulates the principles which the ancient poet, in his opinion, observed: (1) The actor should be adapted to the part or parts to which he is assigned; (2) parts should be combined on the basis of age, i. e., characters of like age should fall to the same actor; (3) female rôles should be grouped. The application of these principles would be desirable, but the economy of the play, concludes Hermann, usually determines which rôles are to be doubled and thus only in rare instances may any choice be exercised and the suitability of the actor to the part receive due consideration. Throughout Hermann's discussion there seems to run an element of inconsistency. For example, he finds no objection, apparently, to the doubling of the parts of Antigone

and Teiresias, Iphigeneia and Old Man in *Iphigeneia at Aulis*, Chrysothemis and Pedagogue in Soph. *Electra*; and yet in the *Phoenissae* the principle of doubling rôles of like age is given as the reason for combining the part of Eteocles, rather than that of his somewhat younger brother, Polyneices, with that of the aged Pedagogue. When the arrangement of the scenes forces the doubling of inharmonious parts, Hermann seeks to point out the heightened effect gained by such a combination, but when the economy of the play allows some choice in the matter, the principle of the fitness of the actor for the part is applied with the precision of a modern stage-manager.

There are no principles which may be consistently applied in the doubling of parts under the three-actor law. This consideration led Richter *Vertheilung der Rollen* (Berlin, 1842) to attack Hermann's fundamental thesis, viz., that the poets composed plays according to a three-actor scheme. The poets, he says (p. 3), wrote their plays according to certain principles of dramatic art, giving little heed to a three-actor rule. They did not set up a schematic outline of three actors to which the arrangement and order of the entire play was made to conform, but concerned themselves with the division of rôles only after the play was completed and the time of presentation had come. The use, he urges, of "parachoreg mata,"<sup>1</sup> extra-performers furnished by the choregus, proves that the poets did not regard the three-actor rule as binding. The mixture of rôles which the different actors had to play also indicates that the three-actor scheme was not an important factor in the composition of a play. The protagonist plays the hardest rôle and other miscellaneous characters; the deuteragonist plays no special kind of rôles, since the distribution of parts is "etwas Zufälliges," not premeditated. Of course the second actor would take the part that stands in closest relation to the central figure, that exerts the greatest influence on his life and destiny, and may be friendly or hostile. In like manner the tritagonist gets his rôles, not by the plan of the poet, but in a haphazard way as the arrangement requires. The parts that fall to him are usually of a miscellaneous character. The poet divided

<sup>1</sup> See my article "On the Meaning of *παραχορήγημα*" in *Class. Phil.* II (1907), pp. 387 ff. In this article I endeavored to show that *παραχορήγημα* had no application to dramatic production at Athens in the fifth century, that the word does not occur in the classical period at all, but is of late origin, being formed from the verb *παραχορηγεῖν* in its late *derived* meaning of "to furnish in addition, or extra," and thus had no connection with the choregus or the choregic system. *παραχορήγημα* meant simply "an extra provision," "an additional expense," and was applied in the *technitae*-period to all "extras" furnished over and above the regular traveling company.

the parts among three actors, not from choice, but because the state did not put a fourth at his disposal. Sometimes the economy of a play causes a happy doubling of parts, but more often the combination is bad. However, a fourth was never introduced; otherwise we should have had some record of it. The appropriate name for a fourth actor does not occur. Richter's results, however, when he actually distributes the parts in the plays, are essentially the same as Hermann's.

The history of the discussion as to the applicability of the rule to comedy need not detain us long. It was for a long time the prevailing opinion that the rule did not apply to comedy. For this view we may compare Enger *De histr. in Arist. Thesm. numero*, p. 7 (Oppeln, 1840): "etiam quartarum partium actorem ab Aristophane adhibitum esse constat;" K. O. Müller *Gesch. griech. Litt.* II<sup>4</sup>, p. 13: "Doch scheint Aristophanes in anderen Stücken (i. e., than *Acharnians*) auch einen vierten Schauspieler zugezogen zu haben: Die Wespen liessen sich doch schwerlich anders als von vier Schauspielern aufführen;" C. F. Hermann in *Berl. Jahrb.* 1843, p. 391, expressly states that comedy was not under the three-actor law. But since the appearance of Beer's book *Ueber. d. Zahl d. Schausp. bei Arist.* (Lpz., 1844), opinion has undergone a complete change. It is now generally believed that comedy was subject to the same rule. This conclusion is based on the following arguments: (1) There is no direct evidence from antiquity for the employment of a fourth actor for comedy in contrast to the three for tragedy; (2) No distinction is made between tragedy and comedy in this regard by ancient writers (cf. Euanthus *De com. et trag.*, Diomedes in Keil *Gram. Lat.* II, pp. 490); (3) In the Soteric inscriptions of Delphi the comic troupes consist, without exception, of three actors (Müller *Bühnenalt.*, p. 174); (4) The comedies of Aristophanes may be presented with three actors with the help of a goodly number of supernumeraries.

Since Hermann, Richter, and Beer there has been no independent work on this subject. These scholars have largely molded modern opinion. We may say that the one point about which there is absolutely no difference of opinion is that there was a three-actor law. The law is universally interpreted to mean that three speaking actors, by doubling the rôles, presented a play. It was applicable to both comedy and tragedy.

It is important to keep this last statement in mind. The external evidence for a three-actor rule is the same for comedy as for tragedy; in other words, if there was a rule for tragedy there must have been one for comedy. This is negative argument. It assumes a priori that a rule for tragedy existed. May the question not be discussed from another point of

view? If the rule does not hold when applied to comedy, might we not infer that there was no such rule at all? The application of the rule is not easy in either case; we gain an impression from a review of the discussion of the subject that the rule as usually applied is not altogether satisfactory. Hermann recognizes the principle that the doubling of male and female characters is to be avoided, that it is desirable to group together for the same actor characters of a like age; but in the distribution of rôles under the three-actor system he has not been able to avoid such objectionable combinations. K. O. Müller finds in *Oedipus Coloneus* that the part of Theseus must be divided among three different actors under this restriction. Richter points out cases where widely different characters fall to one actor. Van Leeuwen discovers many cases where a fourth actor is necessary. May there not be some misunderstanding as to the real meaning of the passages from which the "law" has been derived?

The outcome of this study tends, in the writer's opinion, to show that the three-actor law, if it ever existed, had no application to the classical drama. The objections to be urged against the current interpretation of the so-called law are: (1) Sometimes *more than three actors* are required, i. e., more than three persons are on the scene at once. (2) The application of the law results in *split rôles*, i. e., a character must often be divided between two or more actors. (3) Parts are *overloaded*. The three-actor division often forces one actor to bear an undue proportion of the entire play, usually the "tritagonist." (4) *Awkward situations* are caused by "lightning" changes of costume. Cases arise where only a few verses are allowed for an actor to retire, change dress, and reappear as another person. (5) *Bad assignment of parts* results, i. e., actors do not get parts which are peculiarly adapted to their capacity. (6) The rule thus interpreted assumes that the state limited its own expenditures and the demands made on the choregus to a certain amount, regardless of the dramatic requirements of a particular play. (7) I hope to show, further, that the "law" is the result of a misconception, due to the unwarranted application of an aesthetic principle, that gradually took shape and was later formulated by Aristotle with reference to the drama as an art-form, to the economic conditions under which the drama was produced—two things which certainly may be distinct and are not necessarily connected with each other at all. Does the "law" mean that not more than three speaking persons should be present at once, or that only three actors were employed to produce a play?

I hold that, owing to the failure to distinguish two distinct periods in the history of the Greek drama, two things have been confounded with

each other, viz., an artistic law and an economic custom. The artistic law excluded a fourth speaking person from the scene; it had no necessary connection with the number of actors used in the production of a play. In dramatic performances outside of Athens at a later time it is very likely that the practice prevailed of using the smallest possible number of actors to present a play, and this number was generally three. This custom was a natural outgrowth of material conditions—conditions essentially different from those which prevailed during the classical period. A re-examination of the plays is necessary, therefore (1) to point out the above-mentioned objections to the law as usually applied, i. e., as an economic law; (2) to show that it does apply when interpreted as an artistic law. A re-examination of the evidence will also enable us to determine what the “law” really means.

## II. THE EVIDENCE FOR THE SO-CALLED LAW OF THREE ACTORS

### I. *Νεμήσεις ὑποκριτῶν*

Perhaps no single statement has contributed more to a false conception of the “law” than the much-debated passage in Photius (upon whom Suidas drew; Hesychius and Photius used a common source) *s. νεμήσεις* (*νέμησις* Hesych.) *ὑποκριτῶν*: *οἱ ποιητὰ ἐλάμβανον τρεῖς ὑποκριτὰς κλήρῳ νεμηθέντας ὑποκρινομένους* (Hemsterhuys, Bipont. ed. of Lucian I, p. 429; MSS. *νομένους*) *τὰ δράματα, ὡν* (φ. Hesych.) *ὁ νυκήσας εἰς τούπιὸν ἄκριτος* (ἀκρίτως Hesych.) *παρελαμβάνετο* (Hesych., *παραλαμβάνεται* Phot.). In the first clause it is stated that “the poets” (three<sup>1</sup> in number) received three actors assigned by lot. The ambiguity of *τρεῖς ὑποκριτὰς* will be perceived at once. Shall we say with Sommerbrodt (*Scaenica*, p. 168), Beer (*Zahl d. Schausp.*, p. 7), and Hermann (*De distrib.*, p. 56), that to each single poet were assigned three actors, viz., protagonist, deuteragonist, and tritagonist, or with Meier (*Hall. Litteraturzlg.* [1836], p. 324 ff.) and Rohde (*Rhein. Mus.* XXXVIII [1883], pp. 270 ff.) that to each of the three poets was allotted one actor only, viz., the protagonist? The succeeding words *ὑποκρινομένους τὰ δράματα* favor strongly the latter view, for *ὑποκρίνεσθαι* is the technical expression for the part or activity of the protagonist. In the didascalic records (*IG. II* 972, 973, 974, 975) the formula for the victorious protagonist is invariably *ὑπεκρίνετο ὁ δεῖνα*. Only one person, the pro-

<sup>1</sup> That this applies only to tragedy is shown by the number three instead of five. But the didascalic inscriptions *IG. II* 972, 974c (Wilhelm, *Urkunden*, p. 43), 975 show that the same method was used in comedy also; each comic poet, however, contested with only one play.

tagonist, is ever said *ὑποκρίνεσθαι τὸ δράμα*.<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, the phrase *ἄν νικήσας εἰς τούπιὸν ἄκριτος παρελαμβάνετο* can be satisfactorily explained only on the assumption that it refers to protagonists. It is now commonly agreed that *ἄν νικήσας* cannot, as Hemsterhuys thought, refer back to the poet; also that *ἄν* cannot refer to *ὑποκριτάς* and *ἄν νικήσας* to the poet (according to Schneider *Att. Theaterw.*, p. 130, and Grysar *De Graec. trag. qualis fuit circum temp. Dem.*, p. 25). *ἄν νικήσας* must refer to *ὑποκριτὰς τοὺς ὑποκρινομένους τὰ δράματα*. This step toward a correct interpretation was reached by Meier (*loc. cit.*, p. 325), whom Beer (p. 7), Sommerbrodt (p. 168), Müller (*Philol. XXIII* [1866], p. 518) followed; but these scholars identified the contest of actors here mentioned with the *κρίσις*, the preliminary test to which all actors had to submit in order to become eligible for assignment to the poets. This position is obviously untenable, as Rohde (p. 273) has pointed out. It is impossible to speak of a single victor in a contest in which a large number of actors qualify. *ἄν νικήσας*, however, would not be applicable to *οἱ ὑποκρινούμενοι* if secondary actors are included. There is no record or mention in all literature of any contest between the deuteragonist and tritagonist. The "victor" here referred to, therefore, has no connection with a "contest" in which actors were selected by the archon, nor with any contest of deuteragonists and tritagonists with each other, but is merely the protagonist that won the prize over the other protagonists in the regular contest in the theatre. This actors' contest in Athens is abundantly attested by the inscriptions.<sup>2</sup> Contests were instituted at other festivals outside of Athens in a similar manner.<sup>3</sup> References in literature to such contests are numerous.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This technical use of the word is admirably illustrated in Dem. *De jals. leg.* 246: *τοῦτο τὸ δράμα (Phoenissae) οὐδεπάποτ' οὔτε Θεόδωρος οὔτ' Ἀριστέδημος ὑπεκρίναντο, . . . . Ἀρτιγῆνη δὲ Σοφοκλέους πολλάκις μὲν Θεόδωρος, πολλάκις δὲ Ἀριστέδημος ὑποκέριται.* Any actor, however, may be said to *ὑποκρίνεσθαι* a given rôle (*μέρος* or *πρόσωπον*); cf. Alciphron *Ep.* iii. 35 Schepers [71].

<sup>2</sup> *Dionysia*: tragic actors' contest established in 450/49, cf. *IG. II* 971 *b*, col. iii as restored by Capps; comic actors' contest, *IG. II* 977 *b' c'*, introduced probably ca. 307 (*Am. Jour. Arch.* IV, 1900, p. 85); *Lenaea*: tragic actors' contest established ca. 432, Reisch *Zeitschr. öster. Gym.*, 1897, p. 306, *IG. II* 977 *rs*; comic actors' contest, *IG. II* 977 *xi'* (mid. iv cent.) and as early as the *Pax* (Körte *Rhein. Mus.* LII, 1897 pp. 172 ff.). See Wilhelm *Urkunden dramat. Aufführ.* for the text of these documents; the fragments are designated by his letters.

<sup>3</sup> At Orchomenus, ii cent. B. C., *IG. VII* 3195 ff.; at Thespiae, iii cent. B. C., *ibid.* 1760-62; at Oropus, i cent. B. C., *ibid.* 416-20; also at Samos, cf. Brinck *Diss. Halen.* VII, no. 101, p. 211.

<sup>4</sup> Schneider *Att. Theaterw.*, p. 146, cites a few cases; Plut. *De Alex. fort.* 334 *e*; *Vita Alex.* 29; *Quaest. conviv.* ix. 737 *b*; schol. Aeschin. *De jals. leg.* 15; *Athen.* xiii. 584 *d*; Aristotle *Eth. Nicom.* 1111 *b* 24 (iii. 4); and other references are given by Müller *Bühnenalt.*, p. 330.

The above evidence is sufficient to show that the contest of actors was common wherever dramatic performances were held, and secondly, that such contests at Athens extended back to the middle of the fifth century. The relatively late period at which the actors' contest was supposed to have been introduced had long barred the way to a correct interpretation of the passage. Rohde (*loc. cit.*, pp. 272 ff.) was the first to interpret the passage correctly by recognizing the contest of protagonists as a part of the dramatic contest.

In view of the information thus gained we may paraphrase the passage in Hesychius as follows: The three competing poets received each one protagonist assigned by lot. This protagonist acted in all the plays of the poet to whom he was allotted. The actor who won the prize for acting over his two competitors, was exempt the following year from the preliminary test of actors who desired to be chosen by the archon as protagonists in the tragedies (and comedies) of that year.<sup>1</sup>

The method described by the lexicographers is in accord with the Athenian records of dramatic exhibitions in the latter half of the fifth century, in which one and the same actor appeared in all the plays of a poet. Thus Callippides<sup>2</sup> acted the two tragedies of Callistratus; the two of his rival were acted by Lysicrates (*IG. II* 972, 418 B. C., Lenaea). The formula in the didascalic records for tragedy is always: poet, plays, actor. The system was modified before the middle of the fourth century, when each actor appeared in one play of each of the three poets, e. g., Astydamas exhibited three tragedies in 341 B. C.: his *Achilles* was acted by Thettalus, his *Athamas* by Neoptolemus, and his *Antigone* by Athenodorus. The tragedies of each of his competitors were performed by the same three actors; see *IG. II* 973 (Dionysia).

<sup>1</sup> The exact nature of this preliminary test is not known. By some kind of a contest, however, the archon selected, from the large number of actors who had applied for admission to play in the festival, as many protagonists as there were plays to be given. These were assigned to the poets by lot. It is probable that the poets drew lots for order of choice and then each poet selected his actor. The method of choosing the other actors for each play is unknown. Probably each protagonist chose his troupe. The "competitive test" at the Chytri, discontinued and then revived by Lycurgus (*Vit. X Orat.* 841 f), was very likely this preliminary test of the comic actors. The victor was entered in the list of protagonists entitled to compete at the City Dionysia (*εἰς δότυ καταλέγεσθαι*).

<sup>2</sup> Wilhelm *Urk.* pp. 52 f. Rohde's query whether it were possible to understand *τρεῖς ὑποκριταί* to mean three protagonists which were allowed each poet is not to be considered. It is against the inscriptive evidence according to which one protagonist is allowed for a trilogy. Besides, it causes other difficulties. Which one acted the satyr-drama? Did all nine of Rohde's protagonists compete for the victory? The lexicographers state explicitly "whichever one of the three actors won," etc.

This method of assigning actors to poets by lot did not apparently antedate the institution of the actors' contest 449 B. C.; cf. ὁ νικήσας.<sup>1</sup> This supposition is further justified by the statement of Ister that Sophocles wrote plays for particular actors and by the tradition that certain actors were permanently associated with Aeschylus. Furthermore, the passage contains no reference to the assignment of comic actors, for in comedy five poets competed *and hence five actors*, not three, except during the Peloponnesian War.

What then does this gloss teach us with reference to the number of actors assigned to each poet? Merely that each tragic<sup>2</sup> poet was allotted one protagonist. The passage has nothing to say in regard to the number of actors allowed for the performance of a play; no reference is made to the *secondary* actors, deuteragonist and tritagonist. We may add further that our sole information on the manner of assigning actors to the poets and the number of actors assigned to each is derived from this passage. In other words, we know nothing about the assignment of other actors than the protagonists; we have no evidence for a limitation of the number of actors used for a play. The current conception that the state allowed any special or limited number of performers to a poet is an assumption based on no statement of the ancients, and is traceable to a misunderstanding of this gloss in the lexicographers.

## 2. ARISTOTLE AND HORACE THE BASIS FOR THE AESTHETIC LAW

We may now pass to a more independent<sup>3</sup> interpretation of Aristotle *Poet.* iv. 1449a 11-14.<sup>4</sup> In the preceding clause Aristotle has just spoken of the origin of tragedy and comedy. Continuing he says: "Tragedy

<sup>1</sup> At all events the passage is describing a system that existed after the institution of the actors' contest and based upon such a contest.

<sup>2</sup> Meier, followed by Rohde, p. 272, n. 1, thinks that *οἱ ποιηταὶ* refer to both tragic and comic poets, and that the passage is applicable to the old comic contests in which three poets, not yet five, competed; in this period, three protagonists would have sufficed. But we now know (through A. Körte *Rhein. Mus.* LX [1905], p. 428, cf. *IG. XIV* 1097 ff. and Aristotle *Ath. Pol.* 56, 3) that the normal number of competing comic poets at the Dionysia was five, except for a time during the Peloponnesian War, when the number was reduced to three (from 431-425 to 405-388; see Capps in *Class. Phil.* I, p. 219, n. 5).

<sup>3</sup> The passage in the lexicographers assumed to mean that the state allowed each poet three actors has, I think, been an important factor in the misinterpretation of Aristotle; cf. Hermann *De distrib.*, adn. 1; Müller *Bühnenalt.*, p. 173, nn. 1, 2.

<sup>4</sup> καὶ πολλὰς μεταβολὰς μεταβαθύσα ἡ τραγῳδία ἐπαύσατο, ἐπει ἔσχε τὴν αὐτῆς φύσιν. καὶ τὸ τε τῶν ὑποκριτῶν πλῆθος ἐξ ἑνὸς εἰς δύο πρῶτος Αἰσχύλος ἤγαγε καὶ τὰ τοῦ χοροῦ ἡλλάττωσε καὶ τὸν λόγον πρωταγωνιστὴν παρεσκεύασεν, τρεῖς δὲ καὶ

advanced by slow degrees, each new element that showed itself was in turn developed. Having passed through many changes, it found its *natural form* and *then stopped*." The changes through which tragedy passed are explained in the following words: "Aeschylus introduced a second actor; he diminished the importance of the chorus and assigned the leading part to the dialogue; Sophocles raised the number of actors to three and added scene-painting" (Butcher), and with Sophocles tragedy found its "natural form," and the development ceased.

We do not need to be reminded that Aristotle's information on the Attic drama is drawn from the texts of plays extant in his own time, and that the entire theoretic system of the *Poetics* is based on observations taken directly from the plays. A recognition of this relationship is essential to a correct interpretation of the present passage. The tragic art had developed out of its own inherent genius as an independent organism, not circumscribed by limiting laws and doctrines, but following the feeling for the beautiful and that aesthetic taste which strove for the appropriate, the correct, and naturally the lawful. Purely technical prescriptive laws played no part in this development, still less those conventions which grew up gradually in the succeeding stages of tragedy to meet the practical needs and conditions of the time. The application of tragic laws based on philosophic-aesthetic speculation was out of the question. Only after a rich and highly developed material was accumulated did philosophy enter this field and make it an object of investigation. Thus Aristotle drew tragedy into his all-comprehending system. From this material he shows us the indwelling capacity, the genius, of tragedy. The canons of Aristotle were not law-giving for the classical tragedians.

What, then, does Aristotle mean by the statement that tragedy found

*σκηνογραφίαν Σοφοκλῆς*. Diogenes L. iii. 56, who depends upon Aristotle, says: *ώσπερ δὲ τὸ παλαιὸν ἐν τῇ τραγῳδίᾳ πρότερον μὲν μόνος ὁ χορὸς διεδραμάτιζεν, ὑστερὸν δὲ Θέσπις ἔνα ὑποκριτὴν ἔξεντρον ὑπὲρ τοῦ διαναπαύεσθαι τὸν χορὸν, καὶ δεύτερον Αἰσχύλος, τὸν δὲ τρίτον Σοφοκλῆς, καὶ συνεπλήρωσε τὴν τραγῳδίαν*. It will be observed that Thespis, who figures in the account of Diogenes, is conspicuously absent in Aristotle. Aristotle's indefinite *ἡ μὲν ἀπὸ τῶν ἔξαρχωτων τὸν διθύραμβον* seems to indicate that he could name no particular leader of the dithyramb as the discoverer of the first actor. Certain tragic poets of the one-actor period were doubtless known to the philosopher, but dramatic poetry of this period had not taken on a literary form that justified the mentioning of the names of any of its representatives. For Aristotle the drama as a literary form began with the addition of the second actor. Of the period antedating this innovation he had no definite information, or if he had it, he considered it of no importance. Cf. Hiller *Rhein. Mus.* XXXIX (1884), pp. 322 ff. The Vita and Suidas follow Aristotle regarding the introduction of the third actor. Themistius *Or.* 26, p. 316 D., takes issue with Aristotle.

its "natural form" with the introduction of a third actor by Sophocles and that a fourth was not added? Is there any hint that this limitation was due to external or material causes? Not the slightest. The situation is this: Aristotle with the plays of Sophocles before him calls attention to the fact that this supreme artist never allows more than three speaking characters upon the scene at one time. He is looking at the matter from the aesthetic point of view, and as a spectator, not as one behind the scenes who can describe the mechanism of the production. The genius of the Greek mind and the material of tragedy were such that three speaking persons on the same scene met the demands of the most perfect art. The number of actors used in the production of a play did not concern Aristotle, for that was merely an economic matter. The "natural form" of a play bears no relation to the number of persons employed, but to the characters introduced and more especially to the manner of their employment in the scenes. The aesthetic law that there shall be present on the scene not more than three speaking characters is not violated if a manager use four or five actors, or even an actor for each rôle.

Horace *Ars poetica* 189, 190, nec quarta loqui persona labore, is but an echo of Aristotle's aesthetic law. Both scholiasts<sup>1</sup> imply that Horace is speaking of the number of persons that should take part in the dialogue at one time, not the number of actors employed nor the number of characters introduced in a play.

Diomedes 455 (Keil *Gram. Lat.* I, p. 491) quotes the words of Horace in a connection which seems to show beyond all doubt the real significance of the Horatian norm: in Graeca dramate fere tres personae solae agunt ideoque Horatius ait: *nec quarta loqui labore*, quia quarta semper muta. at Latini scriptores complures personas in fabulas introduxerunt ut speciosiores frequentia facerent. Note the contrast between the paucity of

<sup>1</sup> Porphyrio's note reads thus: tres enim personae tragediam itemque comoediam peragunt; si tamen quarta interponitur non loqui debet, sed adnuere statimque dimitti, i. e., when three persons are already engaged in the dialogue, a fourth should not speak, but nod and at once take his leave. The word adnuere shows clearly, as it seems to me, that only the number of persons present at once is thought of, not the actors used for the performance. Acro has the same interpretation: quartam personam quando inducimus aut omnino non loqui debet aut pauca. non dixit, *taceat*, sed *non labore* loquendo, quo opertior fit dictio. inducitur autem quarta persona aut ut annuat aut ut ei aliquid imperetur. Horace's labore is almost equal to debet, which shows that Horace was referring to the impropriety of a fourth actor speaking when three are already present; he is writing as a literary and dramatic critic. It is a violation of one of the artistic laws of dramatic art to admit a fourth speaking person to the scene. Wickham ad 191 explicitly says that Horace is referring to the number present at once, not to the number of actors employed.

speaking persons in the Greek drama and the Roman preference for a crowd upon the stage. The *tres personae* of the Greek is set over against the *complures personas* of the Roman, and the *nec quarta loqui persona laboret* with the explanatory *quia*-clause suggests a further contrast, which he adds in the words *ut speciosiores frequentia facerent*. On the basis of this comparison there are *three* possible interpretations of Horace: (1) Is the number of characters introduced in a Greek play contrasted with the number in a Roman? Obviously not, for the fact is that Greek plays have a larger number of *dramatis personae* than the Roman. An examination of Aristophanes' plays will show that he employs an average of fifteen characters to a play,<sup>1</sup> while in Plautus and Terence the average is twelve or thirteen. (2) Is the number of actors employed to produce a play the point of contrast? No, for this does not affect the audience. The very purpose of the *complures personae* in a Roman play, according to the old grammarian, was to make a display before the spectators. A poet might use a dozen actors in a performance, an actor for each character, but if only two or three of these characters appear in the same scene, the stage effect would be the same as if two or three actors were employed for all parts. (3) Is the reference to the number of speaking persons present at one time on the scene? This interpretation alone brings out the main point of contrast. In *speciosiores frequentia* we have the clew to the meaning, which has to do only with the number of persons present at once. The plays of Plautus<sup>2</sup> and Terence present many scenes in which five speaking persons engage in the dialogue at once.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The *Birds* has twenty characters in the cast, the *Acharnians* eighteen, exclusive of the chorus.

<sup>2</sup> The *Stichus* is perhaps the only play of Plautus which can really be played by three actors; cf. Leo Gött. *Nachr.* 1902, p. 391.

<sup>3</sup> Five actors are regarded as the normal number for the production of Roman dramas; cf. Bergk. *Griech. Litt. Gesch.* III, p. 86, Fr. Schmidt *Ueber d. Schausp. bei Plautus u. Terence u. d. Verteilung d. Rollen unter dieselben*, Erlangen, 1870. Seneca, on the other hand, follows the Aristotelian and Horatian norm except in one instance, in Act v of the *Agamemnon*, where Agamemnon, Electra, Clytaemestra, and Cassandra are simultaneously on the scene and take active part in the dialogue. Though the fourth person as a rule is silent, many of Seneca's plays require four actors for production: cf. *Hercules* 895-1054: Hercules, Amphitryo, Megara, Theseus (mute); choral ode 1055-1137 through which Amphitryo and Theseus remain as mutes. In 1138-1344 are present Amphitryo, Theseus, and Hercules. In this scene Theseus is a speaking character, but is the same actor that appeared in the preceding scene as a mute, for he did not leave the scene during the ode. The *Troades* also demands four actors: 409-523, Andromache, the Old Man, Astyanax are present; Ulysses enters v. 525. The Old Man and Astyanax are silent during the remainder of the scene. A fourth actor is

Horace, therefore, according to the interpretation put upon his rule by the scholiasts, Porphyrio and Acro, and the grammarian Diomedes, was referring to the number of characters that should appear at once, not to the number of actors employed in the production.

There are artistic reasons for excluding a large number of persons from taking part in the dialogue at once.<sup>1</sup> A large crowd of speaking characters on a scene is confusing and is apt to divert the mind of the spectator from the central idea. Those who have attended performances of the more involved plays of Shakespeare will appreciate the advantage of a small cast. It is exceedingly difficult for one not already familiar with the characters and plot to follow accurately the details, or even to keep track of the more important characters. The introduction upon the scene of lords, dukes, officers, courtiers, gentlemen, etc., and the characters of the subplot, and the rapid entrances and exits of these characters, is confusing in the highest degree, and it requires no little concentration to keep one's attention fastened on the more essential aspects of the drama. The play is often well under way before we are able to recognize the leading characters by sight. Shakespeare's art was complex. There was a leading plot, a subplot, and other accessories which are closely related to the central theme, and which may cause confusion at first. The modern stage in general is fond of a lively action. Something must be taking place every moment. With the modern liking for stage-business as illustrated in the plays of Shakespeare the comparative inactivity of the persons in the Greek drama stands out in bold contrast. Characters do not, as a rule, come and go in rapid and successive scenes, nor are they revealed in many different situations, and thus quick shifts of scenery are avoided. In general the action is slow and concentrated. Three speaking persons may be on in the same scene, but usually the third remains inactive while the conversation between the other two progresses. A fourth speaking character, also, may be present, but observes silence throughout the scene. The extreme simplicity of the two- or three-actor dialogue and the length of each scene would certainly enable the spectator to rivet his entire attention necessary to present the *Oedipus*: 1-157, Oedipus and Creon speak; 288-402, Tiresias, Oedipus, Manto, Creon (mute). Seneca's tragedies throw considerable light on the interpretation of the law. In the two cases cited above, four actors were present at once, but only three took part.

<sup>1</sup> Schneider *Att. Theaterw.*, p. 134: "Mehr als drei Hauptrollen würden die Handlung nur verwirren, so wie mehr als drei mit einander in einer Scene Sprechende, was Horat. *art. poet.* 192 ausdrückt, etc." It is the number of characters introduced, and the number that appear at once, that causes the confusion. The number of actors employed does not affect the matter (cf. *supra*, p. 23).

tion upon the words of the character and the evolution of the single plot. For this reason the simple dialogue, from the ancient point of view, had an artistic advantage. On the Greek stage the action was simple, not complex. About one central theme the action progressed in a succession of scenes. The introduction of extra speaking characters to add naturalness to the situation or for stage effect was unknown to the Greek drama, and would have been considered highly impertinent. The simplicity of the Greek drama made it unnecessary for more than three to speak in the same scene; a fourth person would have been superfluous, and would have had a tendency to divide the attention of the audience. It was from this standpoint, the standpoint of dramatic propriety, that Aristotle and Horace were treating the Greek drama.

The number of performers used in the production of a play depended solely upon economic conditions. If a poet introduces thirteen characters in his play, the only reason why he would not employ the same number of actors would be either the lack of funds or the paucity of actors. But the poet, observes Aristotle, does not allow more than three of these characters to appear at once. The trouble occasioned by the application of the three-actor rule is due to the fact that commentators have confused an artistic principle with an economic matter.

3. WOULD THE "LAW" HAVE BEEN A NATURAL OUTGROWTH OF THE ECONOMIC CONDITIONS UNDER WHICH THE DRAMA DEVELOPED?

Tragedy according to Aristotle developed from the leaders of dithyrambic choruses. These leaders were, of course, the dithyrambic poets. The manner of the development in detail Aristotle passes over in silence. He may have conceived the process to be somewhat as follows: The task of training and developing the chorus must have devolved upon the poet alone; he had to teach them the songs and dances. The only possible means by which he could instruct them in the rendering of the odes was to stand out and sing before them in the manner of the modern singing-master. After a long period of drill and rehearsal in this manner the poet might naturally be thought as performing the function of the poet-actor in the production of the play. "The leader of the dithyramb" of Aristotle corresponds to the "some one" of Pollux,<sup>1</sup> the person who mounted a table and answered to the chorus, and, in a somewhat developed form, to Thespis.

<sup>1</sup> iv. 123: *τράπεζα ἀρχαλα ἐφ' ἦν πρὸ Θέσπιδος εἰς τις ἀναβὰς τοῖς χορευταῖς ἀπεκρίνατο.*

Thespis was the particular person to whom late antiquity<sup>1</sup> attributed the introduction of the first actor. He gave the first dramatic performance at Athens 534 B. C. Thespis, too, was poet-actor.<sup>2</sup> The exact nature of tragic performances in the one-actor period is not clear. It is clear, however, that such performances were almost entirely lyrical rather than dramatic. The part played by the actor was not important. At the conclusion of the first ode the actor in answer to the questions of the chorus would relate some adventure or incident in the life of the hero of the story, probably Dionysus. The narrative of this person, who may have impersonated Dionysus, Pentheus, or Lycurgus, gave the chorus a pretext for expressing their emotions in the ode that was to follow. During the execution of the ode the actor would remain upon the scene, or retire to his distant booth.<sup>3</sup> In either event he would come forth again at the conclusion of the ode to relate some other adventure in the career of the person about whom the action of the play centered. This process continued throughout the drama: The stasima were interrupted by short episodes between the actor and chorus. The function of the actor-rôle was therefore merely subsidiary. There was no development or portrayal of character. The actor only answered the questions of the coryphaeus.<sup>4</sup> The relation of the actor to person whose makeup he wore was not close. He was nothing more than an instrument, or utility person, to subserve the chorus in which the main action of the play lay. Such was the crude state of tragedy before the time of Aeschylus.

The drama made rapid progress in the hands of Aeschylus. He introduced the second actor, lessened the importance of the chorus, and made the dialogue the chief part.<sup>5</sup> Sophocles finally introduced the third actor

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Hiller *op. cit.*, pp. 322 ff. Thespis was not regarded as the inventor of tragedy until after the time of Aristotle; see also *supra*, p. 21, n. 4.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Aris. *Rhet.* iii. I, p. 1403 b: ὑπόκρινοντο γὰρ αὐτοὶ τὰς τραγῳδίας οἱ ποιηταὶ τὸ πρώτον.

<sup>3</sup> I have avoided raising the question discussed by Bethé *Prolegomena*, pp. 27 ff., whether the actor came out of the chorus, or was an addition from without, since it does not vitally concern my argument. However, I might say that the development of tragedy from the dithyramb can be more easily and naturally explained by the former theory. Bethé's arguments in no way, I think, invalidate Aristotle's plain statement as to the origin of tragedy.

<sup>4</sup> The coryphaeus, I assume, remained in the chorus, and spoke for the chorus in the dialogue with the actor. He is not to be identified with the poet.

<sup>5</sup> According to Beer, p. 5, Hermann, p. 15, the poet remained in the chorus as leader in the one-actor period, and the chorus was "protagonist," while the one actor was a "parachoregematic" addition, or deuteragonist. Aeschylus, however, took the poet from the position of chorus leader and made him protagonist. The Thespian actor would thus remain deuteragonist.

(between 467 and 458), the “*numerus justus*,” and it was in the subsequent period that dramatic art reached its most perfect form. The history of the development of tragedy at Athens may be divided into three periods: (1) the so-called one-actor period from 534 B. C., the date of Thespis’ first appearance; (2) the two-actor period from *ca.* 500 B. C.;<sup>1</sup> (3) the three-actor period from *ca.* 465 B. C. on through to the full development of the drama in Sophocles and Euripides.

During the first period, before the drama became a state institution, it depended solely upon the patronage of private individuals and the volunteer performers, and therefore rested upon an economical basis comparable to that of the traveling companies in the period of the *technitae*. Thespis was the manager of his company. Tragedy was not yet subsidized by the state, and a liberal patronage of the rich was probably uncertain. The lack of constant and reliable financial backing played an important part in the elaboration with which plays were presented. From an economic standpoint, therefore, it would not have been unnatural if one actor had been used for many rôles. Furthermore, the extent of the chorus’ rôle, the relatively insignificant parts of the actor, and the similar character of the different rôles (if more than one) would have facilitated such an arrangement. The sole actor remained on the scene during the episodes, and if he was to reappear in the following scene in a different rôle, ample opportunity for withdrawal and for change of dress was given at the *stasima*.<sup>2</sup> The largely predominant lyrical element made the actor’s rôle very slight. The combined parts most probably did not exceed two hundred verses, by no means too great a burden for one actor. However, it is probable that in the one-actor period the actor carried only one rôle, certainly not more than two. This statement is in a measure justified by facts gained from the earliest plays of Aeschylus. The *Suppliants*, for instance, has a cast of only three characters, to whom Aeschylus gave a total of 420 vv., an average of 140 vv. to the character, 210 verses for each actor, assuming that Aeschylus used only two actors. The chorus’ part reaches 647 vv. The *Persians* has

<sup>1</sup> At this stage true dramatic action became possible and tragedy assumed an artistic form that aroused public interest and won the recognition of the state. Is it not then probable that this innovation was synchronous with the institution of the *cho-  
reic system*, i. e., 502/1 B. C., according to Capps *Introd. of Com.*, pp. 27 ff; 505/4-  
502/1 according to Wilhelm *Urk.*, pp. 11-14?

<sup>2</sup> See Dignan *Idle Actor in Aeschylus*, pp. 12 ff. The actor stayed on the scene unless the poet introduced a motive (sometimes an awkward thing to do) for his retiring to the dressing-booth, which was not yet so conveniently located as it was when the back-scene was introduced.

a cast of four, the *Septem* also four, leaving out the interpolated part at the end. In the *Septem* each actor may have played two rôles with a total of 234 vv. If Aeschylus, who first made the dialogue the chief part, could employ only three or four characters, by what process of reasoning do we conclude that Thespis with one actor introduced a large number of characters? Dramatic action began with the two-actor scene. In the one-actor scene there was essentially no action. Characters could not be shown in relation to one another, and consequently there was no occasion for the introduction of more than one character. Be this as it may, the extent of the chorus' part in the Thespian period was far greater than in Aeschylus, and the part or parts which fall to the actor was very slight. One actor would have sufficed in either case.

The whole status of the drama was changed in the second and third periods, after the institution of the choregia. The liberal patronage of the state gradually freed the poets from all concern about financial matters, and thus made it possible for them to pursue their own ideals of dramatic art, to work out problems of presentation, arrangement of plot, scenery, and other difficulties which every new form of art must meet in the course of its development. The drama enjoyed a free growth, "each new element that revealed itself was in turn developed." The poets were masters of their own art and of all questions pertaining to it, and were the source of all innovations; while the provisions made by the state were adjusted to their needs. The statuesque aspect of Aeschylean characters, their long and formal speeches, the exclusion of a third or fourth speaker from the scene, were in no way due to limitations imposed by the state through the choregic system, but to the technique<sup>1</sup> of Aeschylus, his inability to throw off entirely the conventional mold of tragedy. In his earliest plays Aeschylus experienced great difficulty in keeping two actors employed, and only in the latter part of his career did he learn the art of employing three actors at once, and even then from his younger contemporary, Sophocles.

Sophocles was the first to see the dramatic possibility of the three-actor scene, and he alone was able to handle it with facility and skill. In the famous scene in the *Agamemnon*, when Agamemnon makes his triumphal

<sup>1</sup> Maurice Croiset "Le second acteur chez Eschyle," *Mem. Acad. des Inscr.* X, pp. 193 ff., observes that the part of the second actor was still undeveloped in the early plays of Aeschylus. He found difficulty in keeping two actors busy; even the two-actor dialogue was not yet perfected.

<sup>2</sup> Richter *Dramaturgie des Aeschylus*, p. 122, says, in reference to the last scene in the *Suppliants*, that if Aeschylus had had three actors he would have made Danaus enter with the king, forgetting (Dignan, p. 15) that in this scene the poet is unable to keep two actors busy.

entry in the chariot, Cassandra is left idle during Agamemnon's speech, in the scene with Clytaemestra, and in the following stasimon, i. e., through 290 vss. (cf. Dignan, *op. cit.*, p. 26). The long scene in the *Orestes* between Electra and Pylades will show Euripides' inability to use three actors successfully. From 1018 to 1069 Orestes and Electra engage in the dialogue, but Pylades, though present, does not interpose a word. Then from 1069 to 1177 there is a conversation between Orestes and Pylades, while Electra is silent. A second dialogue follows between Orestes and Electra (1177-1209), and Pylades is silent.<sup>1</sup> Neither Aeschylus nor Euripides, therefore, could easily manage three actors at a time. Sophocles was more successful, and yet he would not have attempted to bring on a fourth or fifth, though he may have done it so far as we know; the state treasury was at his disposal. The three-actor scene was the ideal, according to Aristotle, who observed that scenes involving four or more actors were rare. To this ideal alone must the limitation be attributed.

The development of the tragic art was one of natural evolution. Aeschylus' two-actor period does not necessarily mean that he employed only two actors for the performance of a play, but that only two characters appeared at a time. He may have used only two for the early plays, for the characters are formal, and the rôles few in number. Assuming two actors for his early period, in the *Supplices* one actor plays a single rôle, the other, two rôles; while in the *Persians* and *Septem* each actor plays two rôles. This would be open to no serious objection.

The third actor, likewise, has nothing to do with the number of actors used for a play, but merely to the number present at once. The increase in the number of characters in the fully developed plays of this period, the introduction of many different types—guards, messengers, princesses, old men, pedagogues, kings, queens, heralds, etc.,—the subtle and sharp delineation of individual characters, and the requirements of a refined Athenian audience, would have made it imperative to increase the number of actors proportionately. Two actors may have sufficed at an earlier time for three or four characters who indulge in formal speeches of highly wrought poetry at a time when the lyrical parts constituted more than half the play, but *three actors* would have been quite insufficient for the eight or ten characters of individual types in plays where the chorus' part is comparatively small. The main interest ceased to reside in the lyrics and

<sup>1</sup> Navarre *Dionysos*, p. 220: "A proprement parler, il n'y a presque jamais dans le théâtre grec de dialogues à trois, mais une série de dialogues à deux, où l'un des interlocuteurs est remplacé de temps à autre." This is especially applicable to Euripides.

speeches. These were supplanted by acting and the portrayal of character. The drama had developed from a crude lyrical representation to a highly wrought dramatic form of art. The manner of production, we should like to believe, progressed and improved as the drama became more perfect.

Do we find in tracing the development of tragedy any cause or source from which a restriction of the number of actors used in the performance of a play could logically have arisen? There existed no such cause. A strict limitation would not have been a natural outgrowth of the choregic system, the very purpose of which was to make adequate provision for dramatic exhibitions.

#### 4. EVIDENCE BASED ON THE TERMS PROTAGONIST, DEUTERAGONIST, AND TRITAGONIST

The use of the terms "protagonist," "deuteronist," and "tritagonist" and the absence of the appropriate term for a fourth actor, "tetragonist," have seemed to many to signify that a fourth performer was never used in the presentation of a Greek play. In view of the general misunderstanding of the "law" it is not strange that the non-occurrence of such a term should have been taken as corroborative evidence and thus should have led to this conclusion. The facts, however, as to the usage of the terms will show that no inference relative to the number of actors actually used may be drawn from the lack of the words "tetragonist" and "pentagonist."

The words "protagonist," "deuteronist," and "tritagonist," as titles by which the three actors who spoke all the rôles of a play are designated, are late in origin, and even in the late period are conspicuously rare. The earliest occurrence of "protagonist" is figurative—the well-known passage of the *Poetics* (iv. 1449 a 16), where Aristotle enumerates the innovations wrought in tragedy by Aeschylus.<sup>1</sup> Demosthenes does not use the word.<sup>2</sup> It occurs in no inscription or official record; in these the leading actor of a company is referred to always as ὑποκριτής or as κωμῳδός or τραγῳδός.<sup>3</sup> The leading actor was not designated in classical times by

<sup>1</sup> ἡλάττωσε τὰ τοῦ χοροῦ καὶ τὸν λόγον πρωταγωνιστὴν παρεσκεύασεν. In *Pol.* 1338 a 30 (v [viii]. 4. 5) he again uses the word in a metaphorical sense: ὥστε τὸ καλὸν, ἀλλ' οὐ τὸ θηριῷδες, δεῖ πρωταγωνιστεῖν. The figure is not necessarily derived from acting, as will be shown below.

<sup>2</sup> But, of course, since he uses "tritagonist" of an actor, he might have so used "protagonist."

<sup>3</sup> Aristotle *Pol.* 1336 b 29 (iv [vii]. 17. 13) speaks of Theodorus, not as πρωταγωνιστής, but as ὑποκριτής τῆς τραγῳδίας; *IG.* II 971 d and g (Wilhelm *Urk.*, pp. 23, 28), παρεδίδαξαν οἱ τραγῳδοί and κωμῳδοί. In the didascaliae ὑποκρίνεσθαι and the noun are always used.

“protagonist” either in inscriptions or in literature. Not until we come to Plutarch do we find “protagonist” with the connotation usually attributed to it.<sup>1</sup> Lucian<sup>2</sup> in a comparison uses the term with reference to the “leading character” in a calumny, as in a comedy. Pollux,<sup>3</sup> Plotinus<sup>4</sup> and schol. Eur. *Phoen.* 93<sup>5</sup> use the word unequivocally of the leading actor in a dramatic action.

The “protagonist” was the principal contestant, the champion, the leader, the bearer of the principal rôle, in any kind of action in which a contest or struggle of any sort was involved. The six passages above quoted, all of a late period, are the only instances I have found in which the noun means the “leading contestant in a play,” the first actor, and the verb “to bear the leading rôle” in a play, and in each of these the reference to the drama is made clear by an explicit phrase or term of comparison.<sup>6</sup> It is perfectly possible, and indeed, as will appear later on, probable, that the word has come into the field of the drama as a term distinctly felt to be figurative, as it clearly is in the two passages in Aristotle where it first occurs and in other passages of like nature.<sup>7</sup> The literal and doubtless the original

<sup>1</sup> *Mor.* 816 *f*: ἀτοπον γάρ ἔστι τὸν μὲν ἐν τραγῳδίᾳ πρωταγωνιστὴν, Θεόδωρον ἡ Πλάτονος δύτα, μισθωτῷ τῷ τὰ τρίτα λέγοντι πολλάκις ἔπεισθαι καὶ προσδιαλέγεσθαι ταπεινώς, ἀντὶ ἑκεῖνος ἔχη τὸ διάδημα καὶ σκῆπτρον. Here protagonist is the “star.” In *Lysand.* 446 *d*, the actor who plays the part of a servant or messenger is said to win all the praise and to be the “protagonist” (*πρωταγωνιστεῖν*)—the “star” rôle again—while the impersonator of the king is not even listened to when he speaks.

<sup>2</sup> *De calum.* 7: πρῶτον μὲν δῆ, εἰ δοκεῖ, παραγάγωμεν τὸν πρωταγωνιστὴν τοῦ δράματος.

<sup>3</sup> *i. 124*: ἡ μεσὴ μὲν βασιλείου ἡ σπῆλαιον ἡ οἶκος ἔνδοκος ἡ πᾶν τοῦ πρωταγωνιστοῦ τοῦ δράματος, ἡ δὲ δεξιὰ τοῦ δευτεραγωνιστοῦντος καταγάγων· ἡ δὲ ἀριστερὰ τὸ εὐτελέστατον ἔχει πρόσωπον. According to this, Creon, being a third rôle, could not enter from his palace, else every king in a play whose back-scene is a palace must be a first-class part, i. e., of the protagonist. Pollux cannot be referring to the classical period, but possibly to the production of plays in the post-classical period.

<sup>4</sup> *iii. 2*, p. 484 Creuz. (quoted by A. Müller, p. 180, n. 4): ὥσπερ ἐν δράμασι τὰ μὲν τάπτει αὐτὸς ὁ ποιητής, τοὺς δὲ χρῆται οὐδειν ἥδη· οὐ γὰρ αὐτὸς πρωταγωνιστὴν οὐδὲ δεύτερον οὐδὲ τρίτον ποιεῖ, ἀλλὰ διόδυς ἐκάστῳ τοὺς προσήκοντας λόγους, κτλ.

<sup>5</sup> ταῦτα μηχανᾶσθαι φασι τὸν Εὐριπίδην ἵνα τὸν πρωταγωνιστὴν ἀπὸ τοῦ τῆς Ἰοκάστης προσώπου μετασκενάσῃ.

<sup>6</sup> Plutarch, ὁ ἐν τραγῳδίᾳ πρωταγωνιστὴς and οἷον ἐν τραγῳδίαις; Lucian, καθάπερ ἐν ταῖς κωμῳδίαις and ὁ πρωταγωνιστὴς τοῦ δράματος (the slanderer is, as it were, the leading actor, the slandered is second, the hearer of the slander third, see below, p. 37, n. 1); Pollux is speaking of the theatre, and schol. Eur. *Phoen.* of the drama; Plotinus, ὥσπερ ἐν δράμασι.

<sup>7</sup> Apollon. *Lex. Hom.* s. ὑποκρίνατο· πρωταγωνιστοῦντος τοῦ χοροῦ; [Plut.] *De mus.* 1141 *d*, πρωταγωνιστούσης δηλονότι τῆς ποιήσεως, i. e., in comparison with the



meaning, "first or foremost contestant" in a battle, or a struggle compared to a battle ("champion"), is common enough in later writers, but seems not to occur early.<sup>1</sup> The word is found also in the judicial sphere, but again only in late writers.<sup>2</sup> In all the instances of the occurrence of "protagonist" (and the same holds true of "deuteronist," "tritagonist," and "hysteragonist"<sup>3</sup>), the emphasis is always felt to be on the rank (first in importance) or position (first in order) of the *person*, rather than upon the relative grade or merit of the person's performance.

The investigation of the word "deuteronist" produces a surprising result. Only two passages can be cited where it is absolutely certain that the term means the second actor of a play, let alone "actor of second parts." In the sole passage in which the word occurs in the fourth or third century (it does not occur before this time at all), viz., Dem. *De fals. leg.* 10: (Aeschines) καὶ ἔχων Ἰσχανδρον τὸν Νεοπολέμον δευτεραγωνιστὴν προσίων, κτλ., its significance is doubtful. However, the more natural interpretation and the one that seems to be required by the context is to understand it to mean the one who as orator seconds another in speech,<sup>4</sup> i.e., "Aeschines it is who, having Ischander, Neoptolemus' son (as orator) to 'play second fiddle' to him, to assist in forwarding his designs, applied himself to the music; Plut. *Mor.* 332 d, μία ἀρετὴ πρωταγωνιστεῖ πράξεως ἐκάστης; Clearchus apud Ath. 257 b, ὑπηρεσίας πρωταγωνιστῆς. Suidas' statement about Chionides, πρωταγωνιστὴν τῆς ἀρχατας κωμῳδίας, i. e., "leading representative" in the sense of first representative, is an easy step; cf. the judicial use of the word below. We need not change, with Wilamowitz *Gött. gel. Anz.*, 1906, p. 620, to πρώτον ἀγωνιστὴν, nor with Schenkl to προαγωνιστὴν.

<sup>1</sup> E. g., *Etym. Mag.*, p. 612, 51, μετὰ προμάχων δαριστύν· ἀντὶ τοῦ ἐν τῷ πρωταγωνιστῶν ὄμιλος; *Maccab.* ii. 15, 30, πρωταγωνισταῖς ὑπέρ τῶν πολιτῶν; *Greg. Nyss.*, p. 137 D., ὁ γενναῖος τῆς ἀληθείας πρωταγωνιστής, etc.

<sup>2</sup> The scholiast to Dem. *Lept.*, p. 455. 8 Dind., referring to the fact that the oration was a δευτερολογία, and contrasting the position of those λαγχανόντων τοῦ λέγειν τὴν πρώτην χώραν, adds that the first oration against Aristogeiton was also a δευτερολογία, πρωταγωνιστῶν τοῦ Λυκούργου (cf. Hyp., ὁ Λυκούργος ἀπε πρότερος λέγων). It seems clear, in spite of the argument of Schenkl *Herm.* XLII (1907), p. 334, that the order of the speakers is the chief idea here in the figure. But *ibid.*, p. 467. 14, ταύτην δὲ μόνην χαλεπήν καὶ ἀνταγωνιζομένην ἔχει (sc. ἀντίθεσιν). διόπερ οὐκ ἐθάρρησεν αὐτὴν πρωταγωνιστούσαν θεῖναι, and schol. Dem., p. 256. 27 Dind., πρωταγωνιστῶς εἰσάγεται (τὰ κεφάλαια), the importance of the action itself is emphasized. See below, p. 36, n. 3.

<sup>3</sup> Referred to in the Thesaurus and in Liddell & Scott under δευτερφωνιστής, but not given s. v. Cf., however, ὑστερολόγος, πρωτολόγος.

<sup>4</sup> In this sense the scholiast also interprets the passage: παρέχεται μὲν τοῖς Αἰσχίνου λόγοις ἡ μαρτυρία· οὐκ ἀπήλλακται δὲ καὶ σκώμματος. ὑποκριτὴν γάρ ἔχει τὸν συναγωνιζόμενον, i. e., Ischander, an actor, is a συναγωνιστής in another capacity. But for συναγωνιστής in its technical sense, cf. *intra*, p. 35. So Pabst interprets the

council and the people, and persuaded you, etc.” The other interpretation,<sup>1</sup> viz., “having Ischander, the deuteragonist of Neoptolemus’ company,” would be almost pointless in this connection. The word is quite rare. Lucian<sup>2</sup> and Suidas employ it in a metaphorical sense. In a corrupt scholium<sup>3</sup> to Demosthenes and in the passage of Pollux quoted above (p. 32, n. 3) it means the second actor of a troupe. The definition given by Hesychius<sup>4</sup> does not indicate the sphere of the word.

“Tritagonist” occurs often, but is a term apparently invented by Demosthenes, was applied only to Aeschines,<sup>5</sup> and was never in any period a recognized title. The word is never mentioned in late writers except with direct reference to Aeschines, or in such a way that it is clearly but a reminiscence of Demosthenes’ use of it.<sup>6</sup>

word metaphorically, translating: “indem er dem Ischander dem Sohne des Neop. die zweite Rolle bei seinem Umtreiben übertrug;” Heslops: “who having Ischander the son of Neoptolemus to play second part to him;” Taylor: “the servant or assistant of Neoptolemus;” “quasi secundas partes negoti suscepti tractantem,” Thesaurus.

<sup>1</sup> Schäfer *Demos. u. seine Zeit* I<sup>2</sup>, p. 247 and Völker *Diss. Halen.*, IV, p. 200, favor this interpretation, which Kirchner *Pros. Att.* adopts. Dobree: “Ischander of Neoptolemus’ company.”

<sup>2</sup> *Peregr.* 36: *καὶ μάλιστα ὁ γεννάδας ὁ ἐκ Πατρῶν, ὁδὸς ἔχων, οὐ φᾶλλος δευτεραγωνιστής;* Suid. v. *Ἀβρογάστης*: *Ἀβρογάστης Φράγγος, ὁς κατὰ ἀλκὴν σώματος καὶ θυμοῦ τραχύτητα φλογοειδῆς ἦν, δευτεραγωνιστής τυγχάνων Βαῦδωνος.* Here we should correct to read *δευτεραγωνιστοῦ*, “finding in Baudon (i. e., Bauto) a helper;” cf. Cic. *Brut.* 69, 242: *Q. Arrius, qui fuit M. Crassi quasi secundarius.*

<sup>3</sup> Schol. Dem. *De pace* 58. 6: *ὑποκριτὰς ἐκάλουν οἱ ἀρχαῖοι τοὺς νῦν τραγῳδοὺς λεγομένους, τοὺς ποιητὰς, οἷον τὸν Εὐριπίδην καὶ Ἀριστοφάνην, τοὺς δὲ νῦν ὑποκριτὰς (οὗτοι δὲ ησαν δύο) τὸν μὲν δευτεραγωνιστὴν, τὸν δὲ τριταγωνιστὴν, αὐτοὺς δὲ τοὺς ποιητὰς τῶν δραμάτων τραγῳδούς καὶ τραγῳδοδιδασκάλους.*

<sup>4</sup> δευτεραγωνιστής, δεύτερος ἀγωνιζόμενος. Notice that Hesychius does not say *τὰ δεύτερα ἀγωνιζόμενος.*

<sup>5</sup> Except in schol. Dem. *De pace* quoted in n. 3. Observe that in Pollux (p. 32, n. 3) the left door is said to belong to “the cheapest character.”

<sup>6</sup> Demos. *De corona* 267: *καὶ κακὸν κακῶς σε οἱ θεοὶ ἀπολέσειαν, πονηρὸν δύτα καὶ πολέτην καὶ τριταγωνιστὴν; ibid. 265: ἐτριταγωνιστῆς, ἐγώ δ' ἐθεώρουν; ibid 262: Σιμύλφ καὶ Σωκράτει ἐτριταγωνιστεῖς; ibid. 129: τὸν καλὸν ἀνδριάντα καὶ τριταγωνιστὴν ἄκρον ἔξέθρεψέ σε.* Cf. also *De fals. leg.* 247, *De corona* 180. Vit. X. orat. 840 a quotes Demosthenes as saying of Aeschines: *καὶ τριταγωνιστῶν Ἀριστοδήμῳ ἐν τοῖς Διουντοῖς διετέλει.* It should be observed that wherever Aeschines is spoken of as “tritagonist” to anyone, it is with reference to performances in the country. Bekker *Anec. Gr.*, p. 309-32, *τριταγωνιστής*: *ὁ Αἰσχίνης ἀδοκιμώτατος τῶν ὑποκριτῶν ἐν τῇ τρίτῃ τάξει καταριθμώμενος.* These passages seem to show that the term “tritagonist” was inseparably connected and associated with the name of Aeschines, which would not be the case if tritagonist was the term commonly used of an actor who spoke “the third parts of a play.” Suidas s. *Σοφοκλῆς*: *οὗτος πρῶτος τρίτοιν ἔχρησατο ὑποκριταῖς*

How then did these terms come to be applied to actors? A plausible explanation and the one most consistent with other evidence is as follows: The principal actors, i. e., those that competed, began to be called *ἀγωνισταί* soon after the introduction of the actors' contest in 449, a term borrowed from athletic contests. In that case *συναγωνισταί* would be the appropriate designation for those secondary actors who were the assistants of the *ἀγωνιστής*, but did not themselves contest for the prize. In the course of time *ἀγωνισταί* came to be a general term for all actors.<sup>1</sup> The talent and capability of the different *ἀγωνισταί* varied with individuals and so led to their classification according to the relative histrionic ability of each. The words "protagonist," "deuteronist," "tritagonist" were formed, therefore, as a means of differentiating the classes or grades of actors. The leading actor, the "star," was protagonist, an actor of the first grade.<sup>2</sup> He played, of course, the first part, and in the period of the *technitae* other parts in addition to the first. The deuteronist was an actor of the second class. He played the second part, and in the three-actor period such other parts as the case required. The tritagonist, a third-class actor, played the least important rôle or rôles as the case might be. The terms never signified in the classical period the actor of first, second, and third parts respectively.<sup>3</sup> This would imply necessarily that the lines of demarcation

καὶ τῷ καλομένῳ τριταγωνιστῇ. τῷ καλομένῳ 'τριταγωνιστῷ' is a reference to Demosthenes' application of the term to Aeschines. Apollonius *Vit. Aeschin.*, p. 13: Αἰσχίνης . . . τριταγωνιστής ἐγένετο τραγῳδῶν, καὶ ἐν Κολλυτῷ ποτε Οἰνόμαον ὑποκρινόμενος κατέπεσεν. Demochares (ap. *Vit. Aeschin.*, p. 11) relates the same story at greater length, but thinks that the story deserves little credence. The story is also told by Hesychius s. *ἀρουράς Οἰνόμαος*, and by Harpocration s. *Ισχανδόρος*. Juba is simply generalizing from Dem. *De jals. leg.* 247 when he says (apud schol. *ad. loc.*) that the rôles of kings are always given to "tritagonists." See Völker "De Graec. fab. actoribus," *Diss. Halen.* IV (1880), pp. 197 ff. Of Antiphanes' play *Tritagonist* we know nothing. Aeschines himself is made to use the word in *Ep.* 12. 1.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Poland *De collegiis artif. Dionys.*, p. xi: ut enim voce *ἀγωνισταί* ei significantur in titulis, qui certamini cuidam intersint, ita *συναγωνισταί* vario modo de artificibus una de palma certantibus usurpatur. The use of *ἀγωνισταί* to designate actors is common in inscriptions of the guilds: *CIG.* II 3082. 18 (Lüders 80): *θέματα ἐκ τῶν λοιῶν ἔθηκεν τοῖς ἀγωνισταῖς*; Lebas *As. Min.* III, 1620 c (Aphrodisias): *διὰ τὸ τοὺς ἀγωνιστὰς ὑστερὸν ἀποδημῆσαι, κτλ.*; *Arch. Epigr. Mitt. aus Oesterreich* IX, p. 130, n. 98: *ἡδη τοὺς ἀγωνιστὰς ἀνεκαλέσατο*; Lebas III. 139 (Ephesus): *τὰ θέματα τοῖς ἀγωνισταῖς αὐξήσαντα*.

<sup>2</sup> There is no reason why more than one protagonist should not be in the performance of a play. There can be little doubt that many presentations were given at Athens by an all-star cast. The fact that an actor plays second part to another does not necessarily imply that the actor is of second grade.

<sup>3</sup> Wilamowitz' contention (*Gött. Gel. Anz.* [1906], p. 620, n.) that *πρωταγωνιστής*

between the first, second, and third parts in the plays were clearly and firmly drawn, which is obviously not the case. The protagonist plays insignificant parts along with the first part; the deuteragonist plays second part and characters of little importance, while the tritagonist very often plays one rôle or more, vastly more important than the minor rôles of the other two actors. Shall we call all the rôles played by the deuteragonist second parts, irrespective of the relative importance of these parts? No, this would be clearly inaccurate. The definition "actor of first, second or third parts" is wrong and misleading in that it implies an arrangement and disposition of the rôles in the plays which is quite inconsistent with the actual facts, viz., that all first-class parts should be taken by the protagonist, all second-class parts by the deuteragonist, and all third-class parts by the tritagonist.

Perhaps one cause of the confusion which has prevailed since Böttiger regarding the real significance of these terms has been the tendency to interpret the plurals, *τὰ πρῶτα*, *τὰ δεύτερα*, *τὰ τρίτα* and the Latin *partes* as if they implied a plurality of rôles rather than a single rôle. But a consideration of the pertinent passages will show that, even when *πρωταγωνιστής* means *τὰ πρῶτα ἀγωνιζόμενος*, the meaning must be "actor of the leading rôle," not rôles. The comic poet Strattis, using the neuter plural, alludes to the fact that the unfortunate Hegelochus played the title rôle in Euripides' *Orestes*.<sup>1</sup> Menander<sup>2</sup> indicates the wife's proper subordination to her husband, and the lot of the plain knave in comparison with that of the

is a word with a fixed technical meaning and signifies *τὰ πρῶτα ἀγωνιζόμενος*, is not supported by the facts. In answer to his query, "wo gibt es eine Komposition, in der *πρῶτος* den zeitlich ersten einer Reihe bezeichnet?" we may cite Hesychius' definition of *δευτεραγωνιστής*: ὁ δεύτερος ἀγωνιζόμενος, and of *τριταγωνιστής* (after Τριμίσκον): ὁ τρίτος ἀγωνιζόμενος. So *πρωταγωνιστής* is ὁ *πρῶτος ἀγωνιζόμενος*, as well as *τὰ πρῶτα ἀγωνιζόμενος*. This meaning is natural if we remember that these terms were quite as commonly applied to orators as to actors. The first speaker in point of time came to be regarded as the leading or best orator; the one who seconded him in speech, his assistant, was probably as a rule inferior in ability. Hence the orator or actor who played "second or third fiddle" came to be considered of inferior rank. In such compounds *πρῶτος*, *δεύτερος*, etc., generally refer to rank, it is true, but sequence in the one is readily transferred to sequence in the other. Plotinus (below, p. 70, n. 3) has *πρωταγωνιστής*—*δεύτερος* (sc. ἀγωνιστής or ὑποκριτής)—*τρίτος*.

<sup>1</sup> Fr. 1, Kock, p. 711: the archon, apparently, regrets that he spoiled this play, 'Ηγέλοχον μισθωσάμενος τὰ πρῶτα τῶν ἐπῶν λέγειν.

<sup>2</sup> Fr. 484, Kock, p. 140: τὰ δεύτερ' ἀει τὴν γυναικα δει λέγειν, τὴν δ' ἡγεμονίαν τῶν δλων τὸν ἄνδρ' ἔχειν. In the household *πρωτεύει* γυνῆ. Fr. 223, Kock, p. 64: *πράττει δ'* ὁ κόλαξ ἀριστα πάντων, δεύτερα ὁ συκοφάντης, δ' κακοθήης τρίτα λέγει—"plays the third rôle," παρὰ προσδοκίαν for τὰ τρίτα ἔχει. The decent man's lot is even worse. If the figure is derived from the drama is there not here a suggestion of a "tetragonist"?

flatterer and sycophant, in language that suggests either the theatre or the law court. A better illustration is Luc. *De calumnia* 133, where the three leading rôles in a comedy are compared with the three parties to a slander.<sup>1</sup> Here both the sequence and the relative importance of the three are brought out, with emphasis on the sequence. There are just three rôles and three persons to act them. Cf. also the four rôles for the four performers in Luc. *Tyr.* 22.<sup>2</sup> In Plut. *Mor.* 816*f*, quoted above (p. 32, n. 1) ὁ τὰ τρίτα λέγων is referred to as carrying the single rôle of king, and so Pollux (p. 32, n. 3 above) designates the left door of the scene as the residence of the “cheapest rôle” or character—not the cheapest actor or the bearer of several rôles. Cicero *Div. ad Caec.* 15 develops a similar idea in a passage that has been misunderstood.<sup>3</sup> He has in mind a scene in which two persons participate, the actor of the star rôle and the bearer of a minor rôle. The former was also the leading actor, even if he had not so good a voice. Cicero *Pro Flacco* 27 again makes it clear that *partes* is a single rôle<sup>4</sup>—a conclusion that cannot be doubtful to the reader of the prologue of the *Phormio* of Terence.

We may now better understand the derogatory significance of the term “tritagonist” as applied by Demosthenes to his bitter enemy, Aeschines. It has always been difficult to comprehend why the “actor of third parts” in a Greek play should have been so despised, for the rôles assigned to the actor in a three-actor distribution are exceedingly important. Such an actor, we may affirm with a high degree of certainty, was not as a rule

ι τριῶν δ' θυτῶν προσώπων, καθάπερ ἐν ταῖς κωμῳδίαις, τοῦ διαβάλλοντος καὶ τοῦ διαβαλλομένου καὶ τοῦ πρὸς ὃν ἡ διαβολὴ γίνεται. . . . πρῶτον . . . παραγάγμεν τὸν πρωταγωνιστὴν τοῦ δράματος. In 135-36 ὁ πρότερος λόγος (*πρωταγωνιστῆς*) is contrasted with ὁ δευτέρου λόγος or ὁ δεύτερος λόγος. Cf. Aristoph. *Eccl.* 634: ὅταν ἡδη γάρ διαπραξμένος παραδῶ σοι δευτεριάζειν = τὰ δεύτερα λέγειν, and *πρωτολογία* in schol. Dem., p. 189 Dind., and elsewhere in judicial terminology.

ζ μεμέρισται δὲ ἐς πολλοὺς τὸ ἔργον ὥσπερ ἐν δράματι. καὶ τὰ μὲν πρῶτα ἔγω ὑπεκρίναμην, τὰ δὲ δεύτερα δὲ ὁ παῖς, τὰ δὲ τρίτα (ἢ) ὁ τύραννος αὐτὸς, τὸ ξίφος δὲ πᾶσιν ὑπηρέτησεν.. The Sword was of course a mute.

ζ ut in actoribus Graecis fieri videmus, saepe illum qui est secundarum aut tertiarum partium, cum possit aliquanto clarius dicere quam ipse primarum, multum submittere, ut ille princeps quam maxime excellat. The “Greek” actors are specified because they were the best in training and ideals. In Pliny *N. H.* vii. 12. 10. 51, Spinther secundarum, tertiarumque Pamphilus, and many other passages that could be cited, we need not think of a plurality of rôles.

ζ quis umquam Graecus comoediam scripsit, in qua servus primarum partium non Lydus esset? Where the slave-rôle is the leading rôle the slave is a Lydian. Terence *Phorm.* prol., quia primas partes qui aget, is erit Phormio parasitus, per quem res geretur maxime.

held in disrepute. Why, then, does Demosthenes continually taunt Aeschines with this opprobrious term? The answer is stated in the old gloss (Bek. *Anec. Gr.*, p. 309. 32) on *τριταγωνιστής*: ὁ Αἰσχίνης ὡς ἀδοκιμώτατος τῶν ὑποκριτῶν ἐν τῇ τρίτῃ τάξει καταριθμούμενος. Demosthenes' implication was merely that Aeschines was a weak, third-rate performer, not an "actor of third parts." The correctness of this interpretation is borne out by the further assertion of Demosthenes (*De fals. leg.* 247) that Aeschines played the part of Creon in the *Antigone*. On the basis of this statement, critics<sup>1</sup> have in almost every case assigned the part of Creon to the tritagonist as "the player of third-class parts," although the rôle has important lyrical parts, and to the modern reader, at least, the interest centers about him only less than about Antigone. Shall we say with Wilamowitz *Heracles*<sup>2</sup>, p. 150, n. 60: "Aber was ein redner in demosthenischer zeit sagt, ist überhaupt unglaubwürdig, und wenn vollends der hass spricht, wie hier, ist die lüge an sich wahrscheinlicher"? No. Demosthenes was addressing people who knew the facts and such a malicious misrepresentation of facts would not have gone by unchallenged. There can be little doubt that Aeschines did appear in the rôle of Creon and the statement *De cor.* 180<sup>2</sup> must refer to some special occasion when Aeschines "murdered wretchedly" the rôle of Creon. Wilamowitz asserts further that Aeschines could hardly have been a poor actor, and that only on this assumption is it at all probable that he took the part of Creon, inasmuch as the latter is beyond all doubt the second rôle of the drama. In view of the seemingly contradictory evidence, one cannot be dogmatic on the question of Aeschines' efficiency as an actor, but, even in spite of Demosthenes' frequent aspersions, it seems very probable that Aeschines was naturally well adapted to the stage.<sup>3</sup> His figure was handsome, he possessed a fine voice, well modulated and capable of great variety, and a good delivery. It is reasonably certain, then, that Demosthenes depreciates Aeschines' ability as an actor to the point of exaggeration. However, the fact remains that Aeschines is taunted with the "butchering" of Creon's part, which must be the second part, and yet in the same speech is called "tritagonist." The two statements seem contradictory, but the solution is apparent. "Tritagonist" could be applied to any poor or third-rate actor without reference to the rôles he played. A tritagonist was not necessarily

<sup>1</sup> Richter *loc. cit.*, p. 105; Hermann *loc. cit.*, p. 27. Frey Fleckeis. *Jahrb.* CXVII (1878), pp. 460 ff., however, assigns Creon's part to the protagonist.

<sup>2</sup> Κρεσφόντην ή Κρέοντα κακῶς ἐπέτρεψας.

<sup>3</sup> Blass *Att. Bered.* III<sup>2</sup>, p. 222, n. 1. See Schäfer *Dem. u. seine Zeit* I<sup>2</sup>, pp. 240-50, and Völker *loc. cit.*, pp. 197 ff.

an actor of third rôles or rôle, but of second as well. Aeschines was protagonist in that, according to Demosthenes, he failed to make a success of Creon's part.<sup>1</sup> If custom had admitted four or five actors upon the scene at once, Demosthenes could surely have called Aeschines "tetragonist" or "pentagonist" quite as truly.

The words sometimes had a different meaning in the period of the *technitae* (*infra*, p. 70, (3)), when dramatic companies, under the supervision of private individuals or of the guilds, traveled over all parts of Greece and gave dramatic exhibitions. The companies of this period commonly consisted of three actors and under this régime the terms "protagonist," "deuteronist," "tritagonist" might well have been applied to the three actors who acted all the rôles of a play. It is remarkable, however, that these terms are not found in any of the documents or inscriptions of dramatic contests of this period. *συναγωνιστής* is the regular title for the actor who was the assistant of the *τραγῳδός* or *κωμῳδός*, the leading actor and manager of the company. For this use of the term we may compare *BCH*. V, p. 35 (Mylasa): ἐμνήσθη Εὐάνθης Ἐρύφου καὶ τῶν συναγωνιστῶν.<sup>2</sup> The editors of the inscription plausibly assume that this Rufus is the leading actor of the troupe and that *οἱ συναγωνισταί* were the subordinate actors.

<sup>1</sup> Demosthenes mentions other rôles played by Aeschines, but we derive no definite information from them, as the plays are no longer extant. He played Cresphontes, the title-rôle of a play of Euripides, and Oinomaus, the title-rôle of Sophocles' play. The leading part in the *Cresphontes* is thought to be Merope; cf. Schäfer *loc. cit.*, p. 243. We do not know what the leading rôle in the *Oinomaus* was. Grysar *loc. cit.*, p. 29, thought Pelops to be the leading part; Schäfer *loc. cit.*, p. 248, n. 1, Hippodameia. I am inclined to think that Oinomaus was the leading character. *A priori* the title-rôle is likely to be the chief one. Besides it is indicated by Hesychius s. *Οἰνόμαος*: ἐπεὶ κατὰ τὴν χώραν περινοστῶν ὑπεκρίνετο (Aeschines) Σοφοκλέους τὸν Οἰνβαον. We have here the technical expression for the leading actor. Aeschines played also the part of Thystes in the *Cretan Women*, and Talthybius and Menelaus in *Troades* (Dem. *De fals. leg.* 337: ὅτε μὲν τὰ Θυέτον καὶ τῶν ἐπὶ Τροΐᾳ κακὰ ἤγωντέτο). Cf. Schäfer, pp. 243, 244. The importance of the rôles played by Aeschines warrants the conclusion that he was an actor of much talent.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Poland *loc. cit.*, p. xi. The phrase *τὸ κοινὸν τῶν συναγωνιστῶν* (*CIG*. II. 3068 B; Lüders 85) has caused much discussion. Böckh thought of it as a company of actors outside the guild who had devoted themselves to celebrating games at home. Lüders (p. 78) sees in it a band of lesser importance joined to the larger college. Foucart *De collegiis*, p. 8, considers it a body of actors as distinguished from other members of the guild, i. e., musicians, poets, etc. Reisch *De mus. certam.*, p. 105, whom Müller (*Bühnenallt.*, p. 395, n. 4) follows, thinks that the deuteronist and tritagonist were meant. Poland, however, shows that the word is such that it need not have the same meaning in every case. Cf. *Papers Amer. School* III, p. 167, n. 275. ΙΙ (Pisidia), ἐὰν εὐτυχῆσῃ δοῦλος νεικήσας, τοῦ θέματος τὸ τέταρτον χωρέν εἰς τοὺς συναγωνιστὰς αὐτῷ.

In the Delphic inscriptions *BCH.* XVIII, pp. 86 f., *συναγωνιστής* has the same meaning. In the Ptolemaic inscription *BCH.* IX, p. 132. 38, with one *τραγῳδός* are joined four *συναγωνισταί*; in a Delphic inscription (*Eph. Arch.* 1883, p. 161; 1884, p. 218. 16) one *συναγωνιστής* occurs (under the heading *συναγωνισταί*); in a document of the Tean guild (*Lebas As. Min.*, n. 281. 36; Lüders, n. 91), *Νικόστρατος συναγωνιστής τραγικός* is mentioned as the one chosen to carry the decree of the synod to the people of Iasos. Reisch (p. 104), Poland (p. 11), and Müller (p. 395, n. 4) are agreed that *συναγωνισταί* in these inscriptions refer to the deuteragonist and tritagonist. That the secondary actors of the companies are meant is beyond all doubt. The significant fact is, however, that the terms "deuteronagonist" and "tritagonist" are never used to designate the secondary actors of a troupe.<sup>1</sup> These actors are either not recorded at all, which is the more usual method, or are referred to as *συναγωνισταί*.<sup>2</sup>

The terms "protagonist," "deuteronagonist," and "tritagonist," so far as we may generalize from scanty evidence, were used in the time of Demosthenes to denote merely the rank or class of an actor. Hence it is not strange that a name for an actor of the fourth class is wanting. "Third class," commonly speaking, is broad enough to include the lowest grade of an actor, with us as with the ancients; we never speak of "fourth-rate" actors. In the period of the *technitae* organizations the three actors of a traveling company might have been designated by these titles, but there is no proof that such was the case. In all records of this period the members of a company are referred to as *δ τραγῳδός* (or *κωμῳδός*) *καὶ οἱ συναγωνισταί*.

### III. A DISTINCTION BETWEEN THE AESTHETIC CANON OF ARISTOTLE AND ECONOMIC CONDITIONS WHICH DETERMINE THE NUMBER OF PERSONS EMPLOYED AS ACTORS IN A PLAY.

Aristotle's information relative to the drama was derived from copies of the plays extant in his own time, and from observations drawn from these were formulated his aesthetic laws. An application of his artistic rule of three actors to the drama will illustrate in a convincing manner the truth

<sup>1</sup> One exception may be noticed where Demosthenes (*De cor.* 261) says that Aeschines *ἔτριταγωνίστει* for Simylus and Socrates, i. e., "played third fiddle" to them, not necessarily the least important rôles. It is quite incredible that Aeschines should have played third parts with these men, who were proverbially very poor actors. *Vit. Aeschin.*, p. 11, speaks of these men as *οἱ κακοὶ ὑποκριταί*; Dem. *De cor.* 261: *οἱ βαρύστονοι ἐπικαλούμενοι ἐκεῖνοι ὑποκριταί*. Demosthenes means that it was disgraceful even to be associated with these "ranters." <sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> In a Delphic decree (end 1 cent. B. C.), Colin *BCH.* XXX (1906), p. 278, six synagonists are associated with four *κωμῳδοί* and seven with two *τραγῳδοί*.

of this statement. In the thirty-three extant tragedies, with but one exception,<sup>1</sup> there is no scene in which more than three speaking characters take part in the dialogue. The fourth character is always silent.<sup>2</sup> In the *Andromache*, Peleus, Molossus, Andromache, and Menelaus are on the scene at once. Molossus observes silence. Ismene is not allowed to interpose a word in those scenes in *Oedipus Coloneus* in which Oedipus, Antigone, and Theseus are the interlocutors.

Comedy is naturally less conventional than tragedy and should not be subjected to the rigorous test of any law, and yet, allowing for a certain degree of flexibility in application, comedy also conforms to a very great extent to the restrictions imposed upon tragedy. It is comparatively rare that more than three engage in the dialogue at once. Four<sup>3</sup> comedies may be cited where four characters speak together: *Ach.* (98-125), Dicaeopolis, Herald, Ambassador, and Pseudartabas; *Av.* (1565-1693), Poseidon, Heracles, Peithetaerus, Triballus; *Lysistrata* (78-253), Lysistrata, Calonice, Myrrhina, Lampito; *Ran.*<sup>4</sup> (549-578), Dionysus, Xanthias, Boarding-house Keeper, Plathane. Pseudartabas (*Ach.*) speaks two verses, Triballus (*Av.*) four, and Dionysus (*Ran.*) interposes only one verse. Lampito, however, plays a more important part. Even in these scenes, therefore, there is no serious violation of the Aristotelian norm. But these are the exceptions. The artistic law is commonly observed. For example, in *Nubes* 889-1104, where Strepsiades, Pheidippides, and two orators are present, only two speak. Only after the departure of the orators do Strepsiades, Pheidippides, and Socrates resume the dialogue. In *Pax* 1210 ff. Trygaeus, Crestmaker, Spearmaker, Breastplatemaker, are present, but the fourth is mute. In *Lys.* 1216-41, Athenian B, Athenian A, Spartan, Lysistrata are simultaneously on the scene, but after the entrance of Lysistrata the other characters become silent. The same situation is found in *Eccl.* 1043-65, where Old Woman  $\alpha$ , Old Woman  $\beta$ , Youth, and Maid are on the scene together, but in no case do more than three of them

<sup>1</sup> *Rhesus*: Diomedes, Odysseus, Athena, and Paris are together. But even in this scene there is really no violation of the aesthetic rule. There is no intercourse between Paris and Diomedes and Odysseus. Paris takes no notice of either of these persons. During the whole time that Paris is present (642-67), the dialogue is carried on by him and Athena. After his exit the dialogue is resumed between Athena, Diomedes, and Odysseus.

<sup>2</sup> Diomedes 488 (Keil I, p. 491): *quia quarta persona semper muta.*

<sup>3</sup> I omit the scenes like the assembly scenes in the *Thesmophoriazusae*, where the chorus-members are not distinguishable from actors; cf. Capps *Stage in Gk. Theat.*, p. 29.

<sup>4</sup> In the last scene Euripides, Aeschylus, Dionysus, Pluto are present.

speak. We may affirm, therefore, that Aristotle's aesthetic law is, with unimportant exceptions, in harmony with the plays.

On the other hand, if interpreted as an economic law, it is violated in almost every play (*infra*, A and B). In *Choe.* 886 ff. four persons are upon the scene within five verses. Theseus' part in *O. C.* must be divided among three actors. *Andr.* 547–765 is a palpable transgression of the economic rule. In *Nub.* 1105 ff. Strepsiades, Pheidippides, and Socrates are upon the scene immediately after the exit of the orators. In *Vesp.* 136–45 Bdelycleon, Philocleon, Xanthias, and Sosias each requires a separate actor, and yet but three are present at once.

There is an essential difference between the aesthetic law, which is concerned with the number of persons who may speak together in the same scene, and the operation of economic conditions, which alone determined the number of performers used in a play. The three-actor law has to do only with the aesthetic side; it has no application, so far as ancient authorities inform us, to the economic side.

#### IV.—OBJECTIONS TO THE LAW AS USUALLY APPLIED

A. *Sometimes more than three actors are required.*—The following table contains all scenes of the plays in which four speaking characters take active part in the dialogue at once, or where the fourth, though a speaking character, is silent, or, finally, those instances where four or more speaking persons are together upon the scene within the space of five verses. I use the term "Actor I," "Actor II," etc., without reference to the "class" of the actor, but merely as matter of convenience.

Play	Actor I	Actor II	Actor III	Actor IV	Actor V
<i>Choe.</i> 886–91.....	Orestes	Clytaemestra	Exangelus	Pylades	
<i>Andr.</i> 547–765.....	Andromache	Peleus	Menelaus	Molossus	
<i>Rhes.</i> 542–67.....	Odysseus	Diomedes	Athena	Paris	
<i>Ach.</i> 98–125.....	Dicaeopolis	Herald	Ambassador	Pseudartabas	
<i>Ach.</i> 1068–72.....	Dicaeopolis	Messenger	Lamachus	Paranymph	
<i>Nub.</i> 1104–1105.....	Strepsiades	Pheidippides	Just Orator	Unjust Orator	Socrates
<i>Pax</i> 1210–40.....	Trygaeus	Scythemarker	Crestmaker	Spearmaker	Breastplate-maker
<i>Aves</i> 1579–1603.....	Poseidon	Heracles	Triballus	Peithetaerus	
<i>Lys.</i> 78–253.....	Lysistrata	Calonice	Myrrhina	Lampito	
<i>Lys.</i> 431–613.....	Lysistrata	Proboulus	Old Woman A	Old Woman B	Old Woman C
<i>Lys.</i> 742–80.....	Lysistrata	Woman A	Woman B	Woman C	
<i>Lys.</i> 1273–1321.....	Lysistrata	Athenian Ambassador A	Athenian Ambassador B	Spartan Ambassador	
<i>Thes.</i> 371–466.....	Heraldess	Micca	Woman B	Kedestes	
<i>Ran.</i> 549–78.....	Dionysus	Xanthias	Boarding-house Keeper	Plathane	
<i>Ran.</i> 1411–1533.....	Dionysus	Aeschylus	Euripides	Pluto	
<i>Eccl.</i> 1042–65.....	Old Woman B	Old Woman C	Young Woman	Youth	

*Choephoroi*.—The Exangelus leaves Clytaemestra upon the scene at 886. She is alone 886-91. Orestes<sup>1</sup> and Pylades enter 892. The brief interval between the exit of the Exangelus (886) and the entrance of Orestes and Pylades (892) preclude the possibility of the Exangelus changing costume and reappearing in the character of Pylades or Orestes.

*Andromache*.—Peleus enters 547 upon a scene in which Andromache, Menelaus, and Molossus are engaged in the dialogue. Molossus, however, observes strict silence at the entrance of Peleus.<sup>2</sup> The part of Molossus was most probably taken by a boy. Boys appear on the modern stage, often to great effect, and there is no reason why they might not have appeared in ancient times. The assumption that they did not implies that Athens possessed no youth capable of rendering such parts. This is a priori improbable and is further inconsistent with other evidence. The frequent competitions of boy-choruses at Athens and at other festivals tend against the assumption that boys were excluded from taking part in dramatic exhibitions.<sup>3</sup>

*Rhesus*.—As indicated in the table Odysseus, Diomedes, Athene, and Paris, all speaking characters, are simultaneously upon the scene and all speak during the course of the scene (*supra*, p. 41, n. 1). This exceptional situation is probably due to the late date of the play.<sup>4</sup> The aesthetic law that not more than three shall speak in one scene is not so rigorously observed as in the fifth century.

<sup>1</sup> I assume with Richter *Verteil d. Rollen*, p. 39, that Pylades is the ever-present companion of Orestes and enters with him 892. But for a full discussion of this passage see *Class. Phil.* II (1907), p. 387, n. 1.

<sup>2</sup> The silence of Molossus can be due only to artistic reasons. Devrient *Das Kind auf d. ant. Bühne*, p. 8 (Weimar, 1904), thinks that the silence of Molossus in that scene indicates that the "tritagonist," who in this scene comes forward in the character of Peleus, had formerly stood behind the scene and sang or spoke the words of Molossus, while Molossus acted the part upon the scene. Thus at the entrance of Peleus Molossus cannot speak!

<sup>3</sup> Richter *loc. cit.*, p. 65, holds that for the part of Molossus may have been used "ein Erwachsener, jedenfalls aber nur ein kleiner, zwergartiger Schauspieler, wenn wir nicht ganz in's Unnatürliche gerathen sollen." Beer *Zahl d. Schausp.*, p. 15, shows the absurdity of a chorus-member singing the part behind the scene, as assumed by Müller *Litt. Gesch.* II, p. 146. On the question of children rôles in the Greek drama see Haym *Diss. Halen.* XIII (1897), pp. 217 ff.

<sup>4</sup> Since Valckanaer's *Diatribe in Eur. fragg.* (sec. 88, p. 85 of the Glasgow *Euripides*, Vol. I), the *Rhesus* has been commonly regarded as a 4<sup>th</sup> cent. production; Wilamowitz *Heracles* I, p. 130, suggests 370-80 as a probable date. Capps *Am. Jour. Arch.* X (1895), pp. 295 f., finds in the external characteristics of the chorus an indication that the play is late. Cf. Rolfe *Harv. Stud.* IV (1893), pp. 61 ff., for the literature on the subject. G. Hermann *Opusc.* III, p. 284, to avoid the difficulty of a four-actor scene, conjectures that the departure of Odysseus 627 had already given the same actor opportunity for assuming the rôle of Paris. But Odysseus and Diomedes never leave the scene, as 668 shows, *ὑμᾶς, κτλ.*; cf. also 673; *τι μέλλετε;* is addressed to Odysseus and Diomedes. Vater *Rhesus*, p. 53 (Berlin 1837), regards Paris, Dolon, and Athene

*Acharnienses*.—98-125: Dicaeopolis, Herald, Ambassador, and Pseudaratabas speak together; 1068-1072: Paranympth departs 1068, Dicaeopolis remains upon the scene. The Herald re-enters 1071, followed by Lamachus 1092. The short interval between the exit of the Paranympth 1068 and the entrance of the Herald 1071 and Lamachus 1072, viz., three and four verses respectively, makes a different actor necessary for each of these parts.

*Nubes*.—I follow Van Leeuwen<sup>1</sup> in the assumption that the contest between the Just and Unjust Orators (888-1104) took place in the presence of Strepsiades and Pheidippides. The Orators depart 1104; Strepsiades and Pheidippides remain. Socrates re-enters 1105. There is no good evidence for a choral ode between the exit of the Orators and the entrance of Socrates.<sup>2</sup> Five actors are necessary, therefore, for these five characters.

*Pax*.—1210-40: Trygaeus and the Scythemaker engage in dialogue up to 1209, at which point Scythemaker departs 1210. Trygaeus, Crestmaker, Spear-maker, and Breastplatemaker are present, as the words of the Crestmaker 1213 show. The Breastplatemaker and Spear-maker were present throughout the scene, though the Breastplatemaker does not speak until 1224 and the Spear-maker until 1255.

*Aves*.—1579-1695: Poseidon, Heracles, Peithetaerus, and Triballus speak together.

all as “parachoregemata” (personae supererogatiæ). Hermann *De distrib.*, p. 63, says: poctaster ille praeter omnem necessitatem quatuor simul histriones in scaenam produxit. This happens, according to Hermann, because the author did not intend the play for production.

<sup>1</sup> *Nub.*, p. 2, n. 1. He calls attention to the fact that the contest would be pointless if Strepsiades and Pheidippides were not present.

<sup>2</sup> Van Leeuwen ad v. 888. At the exit of Socrates in 686, R and Cant. 2 have χοροῦ, which indicates that a choral ode intervened between the exit of Socrates and the entrance of the two Orators. The scholiast's comment indicates that the ode was wanting in antiquity. Whether Aristophanes ever wrote an ode at this point is uncertain. Brunck held that the ode had dropped out by the fault of some copyist. G. Hermann, Blaydes, Teuffel saw in the lack of an ode an indication that the second edition of the *Clouds* was never completed. At any rate Hermann and Blaydes are of the opinion that there was some kind of a pause here, for the same actors who played Socrates and Strepsiades take the part of the two Orators. Westphal argues for a short choral ode, or a few anapaests by the coryphaeus to exhort Pheidippides, to give the actor of Socrates time to change dress and appear as one of the Orators. This argument is of no weight unless we assume that an ode intervened also after 1104 between the exit of the Orators and the entrance of Socrates, and there is not the slightest probability that such was the case according to Van Leeuwen. The main argument adduced to prove that this edition of the *Clouds* was not produced and is in an unfinished condition is the fact that five actors are necessary for its presentation. This would be a cogent argument if the *Clouds* were the only comedy that demands more than three actors. Cf. Beer *loc. cit.*, pp. 114-38, for an exhaustive discussion of *Clouds* in its present condition relative to the number of actors employed.

duplicata  
heracles & elat  
mecles of a  
doublet  
and  
schoel.

*Lysistrata*.—78-252: Lysistrata, Calonice, Myrrhina, and Lampito, all prominent speaking characters, are present upon the scene; 431-613: Lysistrata, Proboulus, Old Woman A, Old Woman B, and Old Woman C. Old Woman C speaks two verses (447 f.). Old Woman A and Old Woman B are more important characters, and though Lysistrata and the Proboulus are the chief interlocutors, still these old women are by no means out of the action; 742-80: Lysistrata, Woman A, Woman B, Woman C are present; Woman B is silent in this scene, but speaks in the preceding scene; 1273-1321: Athenian Ambassador A, Athenian B are the interlocutors in 1216-41, in 1242-99 the Athenian Ambassador, Spartan Ambassador, and Athenian Ambassador B (mute) are together. Lysistrata enters 1300. There are, therefore, four speaking characters present at once though only Lysistrata speaks; the three Ambassadors are silent after the entrance of Lysistrata.

*Thesmophoriazusae*.—371-465:<sup>1</sup> Heraldess, Micca, Woman B, and Kedestes are together in an assembly scene; the Heraldess speaks 372-80, Micca 383-432, Woman B 443-58. In 466 the Kedestes, who up to this point has been mute, begins to address the assembly in the voice of a woman.

*Ranae*.—549-78: Dionysus, Xanthias, Boarding-house Keeper, and Plathane carry on the dialogue. Dionysus, however, speaks but two verses while the women are present.

*Ecclesiazusae*.—1037-65: Old Woman B, Old Woman C, Young Woman, and Youth appear together. Old Woman C enters 1065. Young Woman has been present since 1037.

B. *Four actors are necessary; otherwise split rôles*.—The dramas in which the objectionable device of split rôles must be resorted to in order to avoid the

Play	Actor I	Actor II	Actor III	Actor IV
<i>Oedipus Coloneus</i> :				
33-88.....	Oedipus	Antigone	Ismene	
551-667.....			<b>Theseus</b>	
721-886.....			Creon	
887-1043.....	<b>Theseus</b>			
1669-1777.....	Antigone		Ismene	
<i>Plutus</i> :				
58-256.....	Chremylus	Carion	<b>Plutus</b>	
641-770.....			Wife of Chremylus	
771-801.....	Chremylus	<b>Plutus</b>		
<i>Equites</i> :				
15-155.....	Sausage Seller	Servant A	<b>Servant B</b>	
235-46.....		Paphlagonian	<b>Servant B</b>	
997-1255.....			Demus	
1255-63.....				<b>Servant B</b>
<i>Vespae</i> :				
1-142.....	<b>Xanthias</b>	Bdelycleon	Sosias	
144-403.....	Philocleon			
456-60.....				<b>Xanthias</b>

<sup>1</sup> If the part of the Priestess in 295-371 is not taken by the coryphaeus, five actors are required for this scene, i. e., for Heraldess, Kedestes, Micca, Woman B, and Priestess.

admission of a fourth actor are collected in the preceding table. The characters in **bold-faced** type are those whose parts must be divided as shown in the diagram; the dash indicates that the character above it is not on the scene; the dots =ditto marks.

*Oedipus Coloneus*.—The part of Theseus must be divided among three actors in any three-actor distribution, unless the situation be further complicated by splitting the part, of Ismene and Antigone. Müller *Litt. Gesch.* II, p. 56, was the first to call attention to the necessity of dividing Theseus' part in this play, and to the extreme impropriety of dividing rôles in general. It is quite impossible for two actors to play the same rôle in the same manner, spirit, and with a like voice. It is, furthermore, unlikely that the three actors were of the same size. The frequent appearance of Theseus adds to the difficulties of assuming that he was impersonated each time by a different actor. The spectator's conception of King Theseus would have been seriously marred at the conclusion of the performance if three actors of different statures, of unlike temperaments and mannerisms, and of unlike voices had attempted to interpret the part. That such a practice would have been undesirable no one will deny, and it is reasonably certain that such an artificial device would not have found favor under the Athenian system of stage management where the matter of expense was not an important consideration.<sup>1</sup>

*Plutus*.—Actor III plays the rôle of Plutus 58–229, but in 771–801 only actor II is available for the part.<sup>2</sup> Hence the necessity of dividing the rôle between two actors.

*Equites*.—The rôle of Servant B must have been divided between one of the regular actors and a supernumerary. In 15–155 and in 235–46 Actor III is available for Servant B, but in 977–1263 the three actors are employed for the

<sup>1</sup> In spite of the serious objections to the practice, many scholars insist on dividing parts wherever the three-actor distribution demands it. C. F. Hermann makes much of the relative difference in the capacity of the three actors, and yet he expects, apparently, these three actors to play the same rôle in the same manner. C. F. Hermann praises O. Müller for discovering that Theseus' part must be divided or else a fourth actor introduced. However, since in no scene of the play do more than three characters appear, he favors the division of the part. So Jebb (*Oed. Col.*, p. 7) thinks that Müller exaggerates the objections to split rôles. Croiset *Hist. litt. grec.* III<sup>2</sup>, p. 246, n. 1, suggests that the character of Theseus is rather impersonal, his character is not keenly delineated, and that there is little psychology in the part, making the doubling less objectionable, in his opinion. Richter (p. 51), Lachmann (p. 45), Müller (*Litt. Gesch.* I, p. 403) assume a fourth actor for the part.

<sup>2</sup> Beer (p. 102) has Actor II play the rôle of Plutus in 771–801, assigning it in 58–229 to Actor III. There is another possibility. One actor may play Plutus' rôle throughout. In that case the part of Wife of Chremylus must be played by Actor I in 641–770 and by Actor II in 771–801. Van Leeuwen remarks à propos of the latter possibility: *qua mihi quidem nimis artificiosa videtur ratio.* He therefore allows a fourth actor for Wife of Chremylus.

Demus, Sausage-Seller, and Paphlagonian. For Servant B, who is also present with these three characters and who speaks 1254-56,<sup>1</sup> a fourth person must be employed, thus necessitating the division of the Servant's rôle between Actor III, who is now present in the character of the Demus, and an extra person. Since a fourth actor is necessary in any case, why should not the difficulty be avoided by allowing the same actor to play the part of Servant B throughout? It is ridiculous to suppose that a fourth efficient actor could not have been found for the rôle. Athens was certainly full of young and aspiring apprentices in the actors' profession who were capable of acting the part of Servant B or of the Demus, or any part of like importance. The difference in the matter of expense would have been insignificant. The division of Servant B's rôle seems to me, therefore, to be unreasonable and unnecessary.

*Vespae*.—The case in the *Wasps* is quite analogous to the one just mentioned in the *Knights*. Actor I is used for Xanthias 1-142, but from 144 the same actor impersonates Philocleon. Hence 456-60, when Xanthias is present with Philocleon, Bdelycleon, and Sosias, his part must be assigned to a supernumerary.<sup>2</sup>

The plays show us several instances where a character takes an active speaking part in one or more episodes, but observes strict silence in others. The silence of characters in Aeschylus' early plays has been shown<sup>3</sup> to be due to the material conditions of the primitive theatre, chiefly the lack of a back-scene which characters might use freely for coming and going. At a later time, however, when a conventional background, temple or palace, was provided, the poet had no such material difficulties to contend with. A character could retire to the temple or palace on the slightest pretext. The silence of a character in the developed drama, therefore, was not due to material or economic causes, but to an artistic consideration. The poet did not choose to have the character speak. However, such parts are invariably divided by modern critics between one of the regular actors and a mute. The division of a part in this case presents no serious obstacle, but it is always desirable that the same actor should play a given rôle throughout. That a character is mute does not necessarily imply that he is idle. The facial expression of Ismene and Tecmessa was probably very effective when they were not speaking. The spectator would certainly detect the splitting of a rôle, especially the judges and other prominent officials who sat nearest the orchestra. The consciousness that the same character

<sup>1</sup> R A give these verses to Servant B (Demos.), R to Demus, other MSS to the coryphaeus. Van Leeuwen ad v. 1256 points out that these verses are appropriate only in the mouth of Servant B.

<sup>2</sup> v. 456: *παῖς παῖ', ω Ξανθία, τοὺς σφῆκας ἀπὸ τῆς οἰκίας.* Ξαν.: ἀλλὰ δρῶ τοῦτ'. Cf. Van Leeuwen ad. v. 457.

<sup>3</sup> Dignan *Idle Actor in Aeschylus*, Chicago, 1905.

was being carried by different actors would detract from the effect and tend to destroy the illusion.

*Oedipus Coloneus*.—In 1096–1555 Ismene is silent, since three speaking persons were already engaged, viz. Oedipus, Antigone, Theseus (1096–1210), Oedipus, Antigone, Polyneices (1249–1446), and Oedipus, Antigone, Theseus (1486–1555). She is a speaking character, however, in 324–509 and 1670–1779. The lack of a fourth performer, assuming that Theseus' part was split, would necessitate the division of Ismene's part between one of the regular actors and a “supernumerary” who was a “mute.” The silence of Ismene is to be attributed to the poet's unwillingness or inability to employ effectively more than three persons at once. Dignan well observes that the scenery of the *Oedipus Coloneus* reproduces the conditions of the primitive theatre, in that there is no back-scene available for exits and entrances.

*Orestes*.—In 1554–1625 Electra (mute), Hermione (mute), Orestes, Menelaus, and Pylades (mute), are present; in 1625–93 Orestes, Menelaus, and Apollo are together upon the scene. Electra, Hermione, and Pylades, who were speaking characters in the first part of the play, would now be taken by mutes if the three-actor rule applies. The three regular actors are present in the character of Orestes, Menelaus, and Apollo.

*Iphigeneia in Tauris*.—Iphigeneia and Thoas are engaged in a dialogue when Orestes and Pylades enter (cf. 1222) and both are silent throughout the scene, though important speaking characters in preceding episodes. Mutes are assumed for both parts in this scene. It is obvious that in this case at least the silence of Orestes or Pylades could not be due to the scarcity of actors; at least one of them might have spoken, since only two of the regular actors were engaged. The fondness of Euripides for the two-actor dialogue has been observed by all students of this author (*supra*, p. 30). In many cases the silence of the third person has no special significance. In other cases he aims at an artistic effect, as perhaps in the scene under discussion.<sup>1</sup>

*Ajax*.—Tecmessa is a speaking character up to 977. Later, 1168, she reappears with her son but does not speak. The three regular actors are busy with the characters of Agamemnon, Teucer, and Odysseus. An extra person is commonly assumed for Tecmessa, thus dividing the part between a regular actor and a supernumerary.

C. *Parts are overloaded*.—It has always been a principle with those who have made a distribution of the parts among the actors to give to each

<sup>1</sup> The obstinate silence of Alcestis on her return from the tomb has been a puzzle to many. Elmsley (*Class. Jour.* VIII [1813], p. 434) attributed her silence to the lack of a third actor for adult rôles. But a more plausible explanation is that Euripides had a special artistic motive in not allowing Alcestis to speak. Her very silence spoke in condemnation of Admetus. She could not throw her arms about his neck and say how happy she was to be restored to him, nor was the occasion appropriate; nor would it have been consistent with the character of Alcestis to have upbraided him. The excuse which Heracles gives (1144) is but a cloak to hide the poet's real motive.

actor as far as possible an equal share of the burden. Wilamowitz (*Heracles* I<sup>1</sup>, pp. 380 ff.) sees in certain plays a conscious effort on the part of the poet to shift the burden of the rôles equally upon all the actors, to make them as uniform as possible (gleichmässige Belästigung der Rollen). A poet would certainly have an eye to such an important consideration if he were composing for a fixed number of performers, but when we find this "equal burdening" of parts exceptional, rather than normal, the question may be justly raised whether the poet himself was conscious of any such practical restriction, especially since we find many plays in which parts are overloaded, in the usual distribution, beyond all due proportion.

The combinations of rôles given in the table below are those which we are required by the economy of the plays to assign to each single actor. Where a choice exists I have indicated it by a note. "Actor I" and "Actor II," etc., are used for "protagonist" and "deuteronagonist" in the sense usually attributed to these terms. The numbers following the name of the character indicate the number of verses given to the character.

Actor	Play	Rôles	No. Rôles	Total Verses	Total Verses for Other Two Actors
I.....	<i>Trach.</i>	Deianeira 370; Heracles 206.	2	576	492
I.....	<i>Oed. Col.*</i>	Oedipus 600; Messenger 87; Theseus 17.	3	700	693
III.....	<i>Phoen.</i>	Oedipus 78; Eteocles 121; Menoecus 38; Messenger 298; Pedagogue 50.	5	585	900
		or			
		Oedipus 78; Polyneices 136; Teiresias 98; Pedagogue 50	5	660	823
		Messenger 298.			
III.....	<i>Elec. (Eur.)</i>	Peasant 90; Clytaemestra 75; Old Man 84; Messenger 91; Castor or Pollux 86.	5	426	684
III.....	<i>Oed. Col.</i>	Ismene 60; Theseus 105; Creon 91; Polyneices 122; Stranger 32.	5	419	974
III.....	<i>Ion</i> †	Hermes 81; Xuthus 72; Pedagogue 132; Servant 114; Pythia 32; Athena 56.	6	487	840
III.....	<i>Orest.</i>	Tyndareus 87; Apollo 51; Helena 39; Pylades 112; Hermione 11; Phrygian 140.	6	440	
III.....	<i>Agam.</i> ‡	Guard 39; Herald 126; Aegisthus 64; Agamemnon 82.	4	311	658
II.....	<i>Aves</i>	Euphides 164; Poet 32; Meton 18; Heracles 30; Messenger 50; Herald 35; Cinesias 13; Prometheus 33; Legislator 7.	9	382	
III.....	<i>Aves</i>	Epos 148; Servant of Epos 15; Priest 15; Guard 14; Seer 17; Inspector 8; Iris 22; Parricide 11; Sycophant 26; Poseidon 37.	10	313	
I.....	<i>Eccl.</i>	Praxagora 315; Chremes 73; Man A 54; Old Woman A 85; Old Woman B 10; Servant 31.	6	568	517

\* I assume provisionally that Theseus' part was split, thus giving 95 verses to the protagonist and deuteronagonist.

† By giving to the protagonist the part of the Servant, i. e., 115 vss. we might relieve Actor III, but would overload the part of Ion, which alone comprises 467 vss. The above distribution is the one preferred by Hermann, p. 48, and Richter, p. 69.

‡ This assignment is not the only possible one, but seems the least objectionable.

The first two cases in the table deserve special attention. In both *Trachinia* and *Oedipus Coloneus* the first actor<sup>1</sup> plays rôles which exceed in the actual number of verses the combined parts of the other actors, an arrangement that no poet would have made were he composing for three actors. It is to be observed, further, that the large majority of overburdened parts fall to the *actor of third parts*, the so-called *tritagonist*. This has a special significance, for it is least to be desired that the worst performer should bear the hardest burden of the performance. The rôles taken separately may not be either difficult or important, but when five or six minor parts are shifted upon a relatively poor actor, almost half the play is placed in the hands of one actor, and that the least competent and capable of rendering these rôles with efficiency. The general effect of the play could thus not have been satisfying. If, however, the actors were equally versatile, then no part should be unduly heavy.

D. *Awkward situations caused by a “lightning” change of dress.*—The actual time required for an actor to retire, change costume, and reappear depends upon the situation of the dressing-room with reference to the orchestra, upon the difference of dress required by the two characters, and finally upon the actor's costume in general. In the early fifth century the dressing-room was probably at some distance from the orchestra.<sup>2</sup> It would also require an actor a longer time to change from a female character to that of male, or vice versa, than to change from one male character to another. The extent of the change is much greater in the former case.<sup>3</sup> Further, if the Greek actors wore full masks,<sup>4</sup> the time to change this part

<sup>1</sup> Since a prize was offered for the best protagonist, it was to his interest at least to keep his own rôles within reasonable and appropriate limits. The protagonist (and in most cases his wishes and interests were doubtless consulted by the didascalus, whose success with his play was largely dependent upon his chief actor's hearty co-operation) would see to it that, if he was to accept more than a single rôle, the other rôles were light and adapted to display to advantage his strongest characteristics.

<sup>2</sup> In the theatre at Thoricus a building at one side of the orchestra is thought to have been the actor's dressing-room. The distance of this room from the theatre would materially affect the time required for a change of dress. Cf. Dörpfeld-Reisch *Gr. Theat.*, p. 111.

<sup>3</sup> To assume the elaborate costume of the Persian Ambassador or of Pseudartabas in the *Acharnians* would require more than twice the time needed for changing the ordinary costume.

<sup>4</sup> The question is a very difficult one. It seems hardly credible that a stiff, expressionless mask could have been used in the classical period; there was no name for a mask until about the middle of the fourth century. The facial expression which to the modern actor is the most effective instrument of power would be entirely lost by

of the make-up would be insignificant, but if the actor wore a wig, nose, and a "make-up" in general comparable to that of a modern actor, obviously the time required for a change would be more than doubled. Elmsley concluded from a scene in the *Choephoroi*, where thirteen verses (886–899?) are interposed between two speeches spoken by the same actor in two different characters, that twelve or fifteen trimeters allowed an actor time for such a change.<sup>1</sup> I shall set up no fixed rule, but shall be guided by the situation in individual cases, allowing a reasonable length of time for the change in every case. I work on the hypothesis that the action proceeds continuously, without pause.

*Choephoroi*.—Servant retires 886. Clytaemestra remains. Orestes and Pylades appear 899. The intervening verses (886–899) do not allow time for a change of dress. 287-721

*Orestes*.—Hermione, Electra, Orestes, and Pylades (mute) are present 1323–52; stasimon 1353–68. Enter Phrygian 1367. It would be extremely inconvenient in these fifteen short verses (1353–67) for either of the actors in the preceding episode to change costume and appear in the character of the Phrygian, especially since the actor of Electra or Hermione would have to make the change. Orestes is present with the Phrygian 1506.

*Acharnians*.—Dicaeopolis, Herald, *Amphitheus*<sup>2</sup> (exit 56); Dicaeopolis, Herald, *Persian Ambassador* (enters 64). Only eight (56–64) verses would be available for the impersonator of Amphitheus to retire and assume the elaborate dress of the Persian Ambassador. In 98–135 Dicaeopolis, Ambassador, Pseudartabas, and Herald are present at once. Even if it be granted that the Herald and Pseudartabas are played by non-regular actors, we shall find it inconvenient in this scene to make out with less than four. Ambassador and Pseudartabas

such a wooden appliance. Objections to masks for the classical period are not unappreciated; cf. P. Girard *Rev. ét. grec.* VII (1894), pp. 1 ff., and VIII, pp. 88 ff.; and Capps's review *Am. Jour. Arch.* (1905), pp. 496 ff., in which the facts are briefly stated. O. Hense's extreme view (*Modifizierung d. Masken in d. gr. Trag.*, Freiburg, 1905) is not convincing to some minds. It is hard to believe that the classical poets accepted so awkward a convention and then resorted to such strained and artificial means in trying to make a virtue of necessity.

<sup>1</sup> Beer assumes that the change of dress was actually effected in the *Choephoroi* in so short a time, and thus, in his distribution of parts in comedy, he regards thirteen trimeters as representing the minimum time for the change. Römer *Philol.* LXV (1906), pp. 74 ff., has a few remarks on the quick changes of costume. For instance Teucer does not appear in *AI.* 780 because "der Schauspieler, welcher bisher den Aias spielte, muss bald als Teukros auftreten und so musste Zeit geschaffen werden für die *μετασκεψίς*" and in *Ant.* 441 the poet sends the Guard from the scene that his actor may take the part of Ismene, who is soon to appear.

<sup>2</sup> The italicized characters are those that depart and enter respectively; the other two characters are present in both scenes.

retire 126, Amphitheus 133, but Dicaeopolis remains. Enter Theorus 134. Between the exit of Ambassador 126 and the entrance of Theorus 134 are only 8 verses. Dicaeopolis, Lamachus, *Herald* (exit 1077); Dicaeopolis, Lamachus, *Messenger* (enters 1084). Seven lines only (1077-84) would be allowed for the actor to retire and reappear in a different character.

*Thesmophoriazusae*.—In 871-927 *Euripides*, Kedestes, and Critylla are on the scene. Euripides retires 927. *Prytanis* enters 829. For the parts of Euripides and Prytanis, therefore, separate actors are necessary.

*Frogs*.—Dionysus, Xanthias, *Heracles* (exit 165); Dionysus, Xanthias, *Dead Man* (enters 169). Only four verses intervene between the departure of Heracles and the entrance of Dead Man. Dionysus, Xanthias, *Dead Man* (exit 177); Dionysus, Xanthias, *Charon* (enters 183). Only six verses intervene between the exit of Dead Man and the entrance of Charon.

*Ecclesiazusae*.—887-1044 Youth, Maiden, *Old Woman A* (exit 1044); 1043-45 Youth, Maiden, 1049-65 Youth, Maiden, *Old Woman B* (enters 1049). Only five verses intervene between the exit of Old Woman A and the entrance of Old Woman B.

*Lysistrata*.—In 829-44 Lysistrata, Myrrhina, and Woman B are present on the scene. Woman B and Myrrhina retire 844. Enter *Cinesias* 845. It would thus be impossible for the impersonator either of Woman B or of Myrrhina to assume the part of Cinesias.

*Clouds*.—Pheidippides departs 125. Strepsiades is alone 126-32. Pupil appears on the scene 133. The seven intervening lines between the exit of Pheidippides 125 and the entrance of Pupil 133 give insufficient time for the actor who plays the former to play the latter also. Three different actors, then, are desirable for the parts of Strepsiades, Pheidippides, and Pupil. Pupil leaves the scene at 220; *Socrates* comes on 221. One actor cannot take these two parts. Socrates Pheidippides, and Strepsiades are together 868-88. For the part of the Pupil therefore, the actor of neither Socrates, Pheidippides, nor Strepsiades is available.

*Birds*.—Peithetaerus, Euelpides, *Servant of Epop* (exit 84), Peithetaerus, Euelpides, *Epop* (enters 92). There are 8 verses only (84-92) for the actor of Servant to reappear as Epop. *Prometheus* leaves the scene at 1552. After the stasimon (1553-64) enter Neptune, Heracles, and Triballus. The execution of this short ode would hardly give the actor of Prometheus sufficient time to retire, change dress, and reappear in the character of either Neptune, Heracles, or Triballus. At 1694 *exeunt* Poseidon, Heracles, Peithetaerus, and Triballus. After a short stasimon of twelve verses (1694-1705) the *Messenger* enters. It would be extremely inconvenient for the impersonator of Poseidon, Heracles, Peithetaerus, or of Triballus to assume the rôle of the Messenger.

*Wasps*.—Bdelycleon, Sosias, *Xanthias* (exit 141); Bdelycleon, Sosias, *Philocleon* (enters 144). Xanthias leaves the scene after 141, for the words *ἄλλας άθρεται* could not have been addressed to him unless he was still present on the scene. Philocleon is visible upon the top of the proscenium 144. I hold, therefore, that it would have been impossible for the same actor to play the parts of Xanthias

and Philocleon without causing a pause in the action, which would be quite inappropriate in such an animated scene.

Bdelycleon, Philocleon, *Bread-dealer* (*exit* 1412); Bdelycleon, Philocleon, *Citizen* (*enters* 1417). Only five verses are available for a change of costume.

E. *Bad assignment of rôles*.—Great actors, like all great men, are also persons of more than ordinary individuality. They cannot disguise themselves completely, or even to a great degree, in an assumed character. Their personality reveals itself in every movement. The question is sometimes raised whether any actor is an artist who cannot imitate a personality unlike his own. If the answer is "No," few of our great actors merit the title to which they aspire. Edwin Booth and Edward A. Sothern are the only great actors of the past in this country who could overlay their individuality with more than a make-up. Forrest and Jefferson were unvarying in all but externals. No matter how they looked or spoke, they were always themselves. So the late Sir Henry Irving, Hackett, Mansfield, Drew, Crane, Gillette, and the present Sothern. It is far from my purpose to underestimate the mimetical side of acting or even deny that to lose one's own personality in an assumed character may be the real goal of the histrionic art as such. Versatility in an actor may be desirable, but it is not necessary. The same end can be attained by a different method, if the actor's individuality is carefully studied with reference to the rôle to which he is assigned. My contention is that any actor is more likely to score in a part when the disposition, temperament, and mannerism of the artist are most similar to those of the character whom he is to interpret. He must also look the part. No actor can overcome his own physical peculiarities. He plays *himself* in other people's situations. "The fitting of the actor to the part" is a principle observed in the minutest detail under modern systems of stage management.<sup>1</sup> We have evidence for believing that the principle is also a universal one. Sophocles, we are informed on the authority of Ister (*Vit. Soph.*, p. 128. 30 West.), created characters suited to the personality and capacity of his actors, whom he knew in advance. Plotinus<sup>2</sup> tells us that it was the habit of the poet to

*Best only, 1864*  
*446.5. 4. pp. 1-2*

<sup>1</sup> A clipping from the dramatic section of one of our leading magazines will illustrate the point. "It may surprise those unfamiliar with the ways of managers to know they are extremely particular about the personal appearance and characteristics of the players. Applicants whose personality is unknown to the manager are required to set forth their weight, height, coloring, and other details which are baldly entered in a book kept for that purpose. It often happens that an individual's physical characteristics go a long way toward making him score in a part. It was not Raymond Chase's previous experience that gained him the opportunity to play Bub Hicks in the *College Widow*, but the fact that he looked as if he might be Bub."

<sup>2</sup> *Enead.* iii, p. 269: ἐκάστῳ τοὺς προσήκοντας λόγους; cf. Epictetus 23: σὸν γὰρ

assign "to each the appropriate part." It cannot be doubted, therefore, that the adaptability of the actor to the rôle was also an important and fundamental consideration with managers of the Greek stage in the assignment of parts. Versatility was even rarer among actors of antiquity than in modern times.<sup>1</sup> Actors in every age have won fame in a particular rôle, or rôles of a certain type. Nicostratus was best in messenger rôles.<sup>2</sup> Each actor played his special type of rôles. Nicostratus may have been incapable of interpreting the subtle and psychological character of Clytaemestra in the *Agamemnon* or of Oedipus the King, and yet have starred in those beautiful messenger parts of Euripides where there is no subtlety of character or psychology involved, but rhetoric and oratory. Aeschines was exceptionally well suited to the rôle of king. His stature, finely resonant voice, deep and voluminous, capable of wonderful modulation and variety of inflection, made him particularly adapted to the epic dignity and stateliness of kings. Thus he played the part of Creon in the *Antigone*, Cresphontes and Oinomaus in the like-named plays of Euripides and Sophocles (*supra*, p. 39, n. 1). The physical beauty of Theodorus (Aesch. ii. 52) and other qualifications made him most successful in female rôles. He played Antigone (Dem. *Fals. leg.* 247), Hippodameia,<sup>3</sup> Hecuba (*Troades*),<sup>4</sup> and Merope.<sup>5</sup> I do not recall an instance where he is said to have played male characters.

τοῦτος ἔστι τὸ δοθέν ὑποκρίνασθαι πρόσωπον καλῶς, ἐκλέξασθαι δ' αὐτὸν ἄλλον and Simplicius on the passage (Schweighäuser *Epictet.* IV, p. 206): τὸ μὲν ἐκλέξασθαι τῶν ὑποκριτῶν ἔκαστον πρὸς τὸ ἐπιτήδειον πρόσωπον ἐν τῷ δράματι . . . τοῦ διδάσκοντος τὸ δράματος ἔστιν. Cf. also Teles in Stobaeus xxvii, p. 117; Alciphron *Ep.* 35 Schepers [71], Synesias *De provid.*, p. 106 a.

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<sup>1</sup> Plato *Rep.* iii. 393 a: οὐδέ τοι ὑποκρίτας κωμῳδοῖς τε καὶ τραγῳδοῖς οἱ αὐτοὶ—in contrast to the practice of our modern actors.

<sup>2</sup> Prov. Coisl. cited by Müller *Bühnenalt.*, p. 186, n. 2. Some of the messenger parts in Euripides are extremely important. In the *Bacchae* and *Phoenissae* the messenger rôles are among the most important of the plays; see Völker *loc. cit.*, p. 184.

<sup>3</sup> The part of Hippodameia is thought to be the leading part of the *Oinomaus* (Stobaeus 27.6), and since Aeschines, who played the title rôle, was constantly associated with Theodorus, it is likely that the latter played the part of Hippodameia; cf. Schäfer, *op. cit.* I, 2, p. 248, n. 1.

<sup>4</sup> Plut. *Pelopidas* 29 tells the story of Alexander's being moved to tears at the performance of *Troades* in which the leading character is Hecuba; but he does not mention the name of the actor. Aelian 14.40 relates the same story, adding that the name of the actor was Theodorus.

<sup>5</sup> Aelian says that Theodorus played the part of Aerope, the title-rôle of Euripides' *Cretan Women*; but Valckanaer *Diatribe*, p. 5, suggests Merope instead, the leading character of the *Cresphontes*; see Schäfer, p. 243, and Völker *Diss. Hal.* IV, pp. 192 ff.

The most remarkable document that has come down to us from antiquity relative to the rôles played by an actor and the character of his rôles is an inscription from about the middle of the third century which records the victories won by a certain Tegeatan actor, the festival where the victory was won, and the rôles that he played.<sup>1</sup> From the inscription we learn further that the actor was a pugilist, presumably of extraordinary size. At the City Dionysia at Athens he won in the rôle of Orestes; at the Soteria at Delphi and at Argos he played *Heracles*. As Herzog (p. 444) has pointed out, all the seven characters which this actor chose are heroes of huge bodily size and strength, and demand the same type of acting. It becomes obvious, therefore, that only those plays were selected for our boxer-actor which were peculiarly adapted to display his physical prowess. The record is extremely interesting and significant in showing to what a remarkable degree of realism dramatic performances, in the Hellenistic period at least, had come. Personal appearance and mental characteristics seem to have been paramount in the selecting of an actor for a particular rôle. The actor had to fit the part.

Orestes?

In view of these considerations, I propose to point out the cases in the plays where this important principle of the suitability of the actor to the part is utterly disregarded in the conventional doubling of parts required by the three-actor law. The bad combinations adduced are those which are absolutely necessitated by the economy of the play if that law is applied, unless otherwise stated.

1. Important male and female rôles must be doubled.—It is extremely desirable that the leading male and female characters in a play should be impersonated by a different actor.<sup>2</sup> The actor of female rôles should be of small stature, fine voice, and should possess other qualifications which would render the actor unfit for male rôles. There were doubtless

<sup>1</sup> Dittenberger *Syl.* 2, No. 700 Capps *Trans. Am. Phil. Ass.* XXXI (1900), p. 137. Herzog *Philol.* LX (1901), pp. 400 ff., first discovered the clue to the peculiar choice of rôles.

<sup>2</sup> Women did not appear upon the English stage prior to the middle of the seventeenth century. The custom was for boys to play these rôles. The famous Elizabethan actor, Charles Hart, began his career as a boy by playing female characters. Edward Kynaston, another actor of this period, was successful only in female rôles. He is said to have worn the petticoat with remarkable grace and elegance. Kynaston was so beautiful in his youth that ladies of quality often prided themselves in taking him for drives in Hyde Park. His beauty suffered no decay even to his last appearance. It is said that from his early and constant impersonation of female characters, he contracted some unpleasant tones in speaking; cf. Galt *Lives of Players*. There can be little doubt, I think, that the Greeks also, in seeking out actors for female rôles, demanded that they should possess qualities peculiarly fitted to such rôles.

in antiquity many actors who were celebrated for their female rôles; I am inclined to the view that these actors were largely, if not exclusively, used for such rôles. Our evidence, however, is not conclusive on this point. Our chief argument is the fitness of things.

*Agamemnon*.—Cassandra and Aegisthus would have to be doubled.<sup>1</sup> The part of Orestes must be added if we include the other plays of the trilogy.

*Prometheus*.—Hephaestus, Oceanus, and Io fall to the same actor.<sup>2</sup>

*Trachiniae*.—Heracles and Deianeira. This combination is objectionable in every way. The characters of the persons as drawn in the play are quite antithetical. Deianeira is a person of deep feeling, calm and resolute. Heracles on the contrary, is very emotional, gives vent to his passion in unrestrained outbursts of lamentation. Besides, an actor of very large proportions would be desirable for the part, as Heracles is traditionally large and strong. Such an actor would ill fit the part of Deianeira.

*Ajax*.—The same actor plays the following characters in the order in which I have arranged them: Odysseus 1-133; Tecmessa 201-595, 787-812, 891-973; Menelaus 1047-1160; Odysseus 1318-1401.<sup>3</sup>

*Electra*.—Orestes and Clytaemestra: Orestes 1-85; Clytaemestra 516-803; Orestes 1097-1375; Orestes 1424-1507.

*Alcestis*.<sup>4</sup>—Death and Alcestis, Pheres and Heracles: Death 28-76; Heracles 476-550; Alcestis 244-391; Pheres 675-740; Heracles 773-860; Alcestis (mute) 1008-1163. We need merely to call attention to the incongruous combination of the parts of Heracles and Alcestis. The part of Pheres adds another unsuitable rôle.

*Hippolytus*.—Phaedra and Theseus: The actor is present in the part of Phaedra<sup>5</sup> in 198-361, 373-524, 565-609, 668-731; the same actor comes on as Theseus in 790-1101, 1160-1267.

<sup>1</sup> So Richter, p. 36; Wecklein *Oresteia*, p. 28; O. Müller *Eumenides*, p. 110. Another possibility is to give Aegisthus to Actor III, who already plays Guard, Herald, and Agamemnon. This would overload the third actor (*supra*, p. 49).

<sup>2</sup> This is probably the best arrangement, though Cratus might be substituted for Hephaestus, and Oceanus assigned to the third actor. In any case the doubling of Hephaestus (Cratus) and Io is most unsuitable. I assume, of course, that an actor was used for Prometheus. The lay-figure theory has little in its favor, in my opinion, and much against it. The grotesque effect of such a device would be intolerable, whereas, on the other hand, an opportunity is offered for splendid effect.

<sup>3</sup> It is impossible to settle upon any definite distribution. Robert *Hermes* XXXI, p. 539, makes six different distributions, but does not exhaust the possibilities. In any possible management of these actors, however, the part of Tecmessa must be doubled with one of the important male characters. I have accepted the distribution of Hermann and Richter as being the least objectionable.

<sup>4</sup> So Hermann; Richter assigns Pheres' part to the third actor.

<sup>5</sup> The part of the Nurse might be substituted for that of Phaedra, but the combination would be subject to the same criticism.

*Iphigeneia at Aulis*.—Menelaus and Clytaemestra: Menelaus 304–542; Clytaemestra 607–1035; 1097–1629.

*Orestes*.—Electra and Menelaus: Electra 1–315; Menelaus 356–716; Electra 844–1352; Menelaus 1554–1693. The interlaced order in which the characters appear upon the scene would make it exceedingly hard for the actor to conceal his own identity.

*Heraclidae*.—Copreus 55–283; Macaria 474–601; Alcmena 646–1055.

*Heracles*.<sup>1</sup>—Megara 60–347; Lyssa 843–74; Theseus 1163–1428.

*Bacchae*.—Pentheus 215–518, 642–846, 912–76; Agave 1168–1392.

*Phoenissae*.—Antigone 88–201; Polyneices 357–637; Menoeceus 834–1018; Antigone 1265–83, 1485–1763. Another actor plays Iocasta 1–87, 301–637; Creon 697–783, 834–985; Iocasta 1072–1283; Creon 1310–1682.

2. Parts of messengers, guards, and servants are combined with those of princesses and other female rôles of delicate and refined type. Necessarily a different style of acting is demanded for such widely different types of characters. Actors of different external and physical characteristics would also be required to impersonate them.

*Antigone*.—Ismene 1–99; Guard 223–331, 384–640; Ismene 531–81. The Guard is represented in the play as a humorous and boorish person, and is absolutely unfit to take on also the rôle of Ismene. One actor plays also the part of Antigone 1–99, 384–581, 806–943; Messenger 1155–1256.

*Iphigeneia at Aulis*.—Messenger 414–41; Iphigeneia 631–690, 1211–1510; Messenger 1532–1625.

*Orestes*.—Helena 71–125; Messenger 852–956; Phrygian Slave 1369–1536.

*Electra* (Eur.).—Peasant 1–81, 341–431; Old Man 487–698; Messenger 761–858; Clytaemestra 998–1146, 1165–67; Castor or Pollux 1238–1356.

*Oedipus Rex*.—Iocasta 634–862, 911–1072; Servant of Laius 1123–85.

3. Youth and old age are disregarded in the assignment of parts. The rôles are also very often of a different sex, which renders such combinations even more inappropriate.

*Electra* (Sophocles).—Pedagogue 1–85; Chrysothemis 328–471; Pedagogue 660–803; Chrysothemis 871–1057; Pedagogue 1326–1375. It is beyond the power of an ordinary actor to play successfully characters so widely different as those of the girl Chrysothemis and the Old Pedagogue under any arrangement, but the interlaced order of their appearance in this play adds materially to the difficulty.

*Antigone*.—Antigone 1–99, 384–581, 806–942; Teiresias 988–1090; Messenger 1155–1256. These characters are clearly unsuitable for one actor. The successive order in which the characters appear would favor the doubling of parts of like nature, but there is no similarity between the character of Antigone and Teiresias.

<sup>1</sup> This seems to be the best arrangement; see Wilamowitz *Heracles* I<sup>2</sup>, pp. 151 ff.

*Bacchae*.—The aged Cadmus 178–367; Attendant 434–50; Messenger 660–774, 1024–1152; Cadmus 1216–1392.

*Andromache*.<sup>1</sup>—Hermione 147–273; Peleus 547–765; Hermione 825–1008; Peleus 1047–1288; Richter adds the part of Female Servant 56–90. Peleus is represented as a feeble, morose old man, Chrysothemis a girl of delicate nature. The parts should not be doubled under any circumstances.

*Iphigeneia at Aulis*.—Old Man 1–163, 303–318; Messenger 414–39; Iphigeneia 607–90; Old Man 855–895; Iphigeneia 1211–1510; Messenger 1532–1629. Iphigeneia in this play is one of the most beautiful and refined characters in all Greek literature. To combine the part with that of the Old Man and the Messenger would be likely to produce a ludicrous effect.

*Suppliants* (Eur.).—Aethra, an old woman of excitable and nervous disposition, 1–41, 87–364; Herald 398–597 (Hermann, p. 51); Messenger 634–777; Evadne 990–1071; Boy 1123–64; Athena 1183–1231.

4. Other unsuitable and miscellaneous rôles must be doubled.

*Ion*.—Hermes 1–81; Xuthus 401–24, 517–675; Pedagogue 725–1047; Servant 1106–1228; Pythia 1320–68; Athena 1553–1619.

*Hippolytus*.—Servant 88–120; Nurse 176–361, 433–524, 565–731, 776–89; Messenger 1153–1264; Artemis 1283–1440.

*Orestes*.—Helena 71–125; Tyndareus 470–629; Pylades 729–806; Messenger 832–956; Pylades 1018–1245, 1347–49; Phrygian Slave 1369–1536; Apollo 1678–93.

*Phoenissae*.—Pedagogue 88–201; Eteocles 446–637, 690–783; Teiresias 834–959; Messenger 1067–1263, 1335–1480; Oedipus 1539–1763.

*Oedipus Rex*.—Priest 1–150; Teiresias 300–462; Iocasta 634–862; Servant of Laius 1123–85.

*Acharnians*.<sup>2</sup>—One actor plays the parts of Persian Ambassador 65–125, Theorus 134–66, Euripides 407–79, Lamachus 572–622, Megarian 729–835, Boeotian 860–954, Farmer 1018–36, Lamachus 1072–1142, 1190–1226. These rôles are obviously of two distinct types. The impersonator of Euripides or of Lamachus must maintain a pseudo-seriousness and dignity throughout, while the actor of the Megarian, Boeotian, and Farmer indulges in a witty and unrestrained manner in the commonplace topics of their pursuits. They also have a “broad Scotch” accent, and thus an actor clever at imitating the Doric dialect would be necessary for the parts.

*Frogs*.—One actor plays Xanthias 1–664, 739–808; Aeschylus 840–1523. A second actor plays Heracles 38–164, Charon 180–270, Janitor 465–78, Attendant of Persephone 503–21, Boarding-house Keeper 548–78, Janitor 605–73, 738–813; Euripides 830–1456. No one would question, I think, the desirability

<sup>1</sup> Menelaus might be assigned to this actor instead of Peleus, but the above combination is the usual one.

<sup>2</sup> Of course this distribution does not take into account the parts of Pseudartabas, Herald, and Nicarchus, for which neither of the three regular actors is available.

of a different actor for the parts of Xanthias and Aeschylus. Both characters are very important. Though Xanthias speaks but 160 verses, yet this by no means represents the significance of his part. He is continually present upon the scene up to 813, and when silent adds to the fun by his by-play. The part is that of a slave full of fun and tricks who is constantly turning the tables on his stupid master, Dionysus. The part of Aeschylus is quite different. The actor must be capable of rendering effectively the high tragic style and must also possess singing ability, since the part contains important lyrical elements. The actor of Euripides also has an undesirable mixture of unsuitable rôles, such as Janitor, Heracles, Female Servant, etc.

*Peace*.<sup>1</sup>—Servant B 1-49; Hermes 180-233; Tumult 255-84; Hermes 362-726; Heracles 1052-1115. The same actor must also play Crestmaker, Swordmaker, Flutemaker, and Breastplatemaker.

*Wasps*.—Xanthias 1-137; Philocleon 144-97, 317-1008, 1122-1264, 1326-1448, 1482-1515. I have already pointed out the impossibility of the same actor's playing the parts of Xanthias and Philocleon owing to the lack of time for a change of costume (*supra*, p. 52). But if we assume a pause in the action, thus giving Xanthias' actor opportunity to change dress and come on as Philocleon, the combination would not be appropriate. Philocleon is a person of most individual type of character. He is represented as a bigoted devotee to that malady most incident to his countrymen, viz., the litigious spirit. Xanthias is the usual type of Aristophanic slave, witty and cajoling.

*Lysistrata*.<sup>2</sup>—Calonice 1-253; Proboulus 387-613; Cinesias 845-1012; Young Woman A 728-80; Athenian A 1058-1189, 1216-41. Another actor plays Myrrhina 69-253, Old Woman A 439-613, Young Woman B 735-80, Spartan Herald 980-1013, Spartan 1076-1188, 1242-1321. Cinesias, Proboulus, and Calonice are individual enough to require each a separate actor. The combination has also the objection of forcing the same actor to play male and female rôles. The same principle is violated by combining Myrrhina with the two Spartans, the Herald and Ambassador. The marked Doric dialect spoken by the two Spartans would require an actor who could render that dialect with facility.

*Thesmophoriazusae*.<sup>3</sup>—Euripides 1-279; Micca 295-764; Euripides 871-927, 1055-1132, 1160-1209. The order of appearance also militates against

<sup>1</sup> The large number of "makers" at the end of this play were doubtless played by supernumeraries, since their parts are of little importance.

<sup>2</sup> This distribution leaves out of account characters for which a fourth actor is necessary, viz., Lampito 77-246; Old Woman B 431-613; Young Woman C 742-80.

<sup>3</sup> Observe that Aristophanes, wishing to parody the tragic art in its impersonation of women, chooses for the woman's rôle in this play a person totally *unfit* in every physical quality for the artistic representation of female rôles—the hairy, old, rough-voiced Kedestes. But at the same time this is a parody given out as a "last resort," for the ideal person for the rôle is the smooth-shaven, dainty, poetical, effeminate Agathon.

the combination. To a second actor fall the parts of Servant of Agathon 39-70, Agathon 101-265, Cleisthenes 574-654, Critylla 758-935, Scythian 1001-1225. This is one case where, as it seems to me, male and female rôles may be combined, if ever. Agathon is called 190 *γυναικόφωνος* and Cleisthenes *ιψ* proverbially effeminate. The part of the Scythian, however, is inappropriate, and would fall flat unless taken by an actor capable of rendering the broken Greek of the Scythian.

*Ecclesiazusae*.—Praxagora 1-284; Chremes 372-477; Praxagora 504-724; Man A 730-871; Old Woman A 877-1044; Servant of Praxagora 1112-43. Another actor plays Woman A 36-284, Blepyrus 311-477, 520-727, Man B 746-876, Maid 884-1044, Old Woman C 1065-1111, Master 1130-50. Thus the leading actor must play two important female rôles and two important male rôles; the second actor, two male and two female rôles besides two other minor rôles.

F. *It assumes that the state set a limit to its own expenditures or to the demands which could be made upon the choregus*.—All students who are familiar with the traditions of the Greek stage have been impressed, I dare say, with the unnatural situations occasioned by the three-actor convention, but no one has justified this convention either on the basis of philosophic speculation or by setting forth material causes out of which alone it could have sprung. Since the aesthetic rule which limited the number of actors who could be present upon the scene had no connection with a limitation of the number of actors employed, practical considerations must have been the cause of the latter, if there was such a limitation.

Bergk *Litt. Gesch.* III, p. 83, attributed the limitation to the lack of good actors in general and especially to the lack of efficient actors for secondary rôles, but without good reason. Every period of exceptional activity in play-writing is accompanied by a corresponding interest in the art of acting. They are mutually dependent the one upon the other. During the earlier part of Aeschylus' career the number of professional actors was probably small, since the profession was still in its infancy; but in this period the public taste would have been satisfied with amateurs.<sup>1</sup> The standard was not high. However, the art of acting kept stride with the development of the drama, so that toward the middle of the fifth century

<sup>1</sup> The earliest stages of dramatic development in England during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries furnishes an interesting parallel. At this period dramatic exhibitions were confined almost exclusively to certain local festivals. Such celebrations demanded hundreds of performers, but the public taste was quite satisfied with amateurs. The lack of actors has never restricted a poet. In primitive stages of the drama primitive acting has sufficed, but when it has reached a high state of development professional actors have been abundant. In the latter half of the sixteenth century, there were about 200 professional actors in London; cf. Collier *History of Dramatic Poetry* III, pp. 84 ff.

the poets no longer found it necessary to act their own plays. The first actors' contest was instituted in 449 B. C. This was probably an official recognition of the high state of excellence to which the actors' profession had attained. The effect of the recognition upon the profession in general was far-reaching. The number of young men of talent who entered it must have greatly increased. The competing actor was raised to a position of importance and honor in the eyes of the public second only to the poet himself. In the fourth century many of the most distinguished men of state were actors by profession. The exalted position of the prominent actors was in itself a guarantee that many would be drawn into the profession.

Unhappily no statement in ancient literature concerning the number of actors in Athens at any period has come down to us, but evidence from other sources is not entirely lacking. The great catalogue of victors *IG. II* 977, will enable us to generalize somewhat on the subject. This document in eight sections gave for each festival separately the names of the victorious poets, tragic and comic, and of the victorious protagonists, tragic and comic. The names are entered in the order of first victories. Of the section devoted to the Lenaean tragic actors we have in *fragg. r s t u v w* (Wilh. *Urk.*, p. 145) the major part of four continuous columns. The tragic actors' contest at the Lenaea was established at the time of the introduction of tragedy into the Lenaea, *ca. 432 B. C.*, as Reisch *Zeitschr. f. öst. Gymn.* (1907), p. 308, has shown. Between Chaerestratus, the first name, and Thettalus, whose first City Victory was won in 347, are 29 actors, covering 85 years, or a new actor on the average to a little less than three years. The list of tragic poets victorious at the Dionysia (*fragg. a b*, p. 101, Wilh.) shows, on the other hand, only 25 new poets between Aeschylus 485 and Astydamas 372, a period of 113 years, that is, an average of a new poet in  $4\frac{1}{2}$  years. From these observations we may safely draw the conclusion that the supply of protagonists at Athens during the period under consideration was at least as large as the supply of good poets, in all probability even larger. We know that a host of theatres arose in and about Athens in the fourth century. As the actor became relatively more important than the poet the profession became one of absorbing interest.

A further examination of the victors' lists reveals the fact that the average number of victories won by the poets is considerably larger than the average won by the actors. At the City Dionysia Sophocles is credited with 18 victories, Astydamas with 8, Theodectás with 7, Anaxan-  
drides with 7, Cratinus with 6; at the Lenaea Euboulus is credited with 6 victories and Antiphanes with 8. But no actor is credited with more than 6 victories. Hipparchus leads with 6 victories at the Lenaea, but the

average is about 2; few won as many as 4. Even the famous actors Theodorus and Thettalus are credited at the Lenaea with 4 and 2 victories respectively. The conclusion is obvious that the number of "first-class" actors exceeded that of the poets, and since a poet would employ only one protagonist, there must have been a surplus of the latter. Since the beginning of the actors' contest, therefore, there was always an abundance of leading actors, i. e., protagonists.

Obviously the number of first-class actors was proportionately small as compared with actors of a lower grade. Relatively few in any profession attain fair success. Second- and third-rate actors, capable of impersonating secondary and minor characters, were abundant. Even great and famous actors, of course, began by appearing in minor characters. All actors must serve an apprenticeship. When we consider the large number of young apprentices in the profession, and the number of actors of second and third grade, it seems absurd and unreasonable to suppose that rôles had to be doubled owing to the lack of proficient actors for minor parts. Those who find in the lack of efficient secondary actors a cause for the limitation are not consistent; for even in plays where a fourth performer is necessary, the part is assigned by them to a chorus member, presumably devoid of histrionic ability, rather than to a utility actor.

Schneider *Att. Theaterw.*, p. 136, followed by Richter *loc. cit.*, p. 18, and by Müller *Bühnenalt.*, p. 177, holds that the restriction of three actors to each poet was due to the effort on the part of the state to be neutral in its relations to all the poets, to give no poet an unequal advantage over his competitors. Such a limitation, it seems to me, would have had a tendency to favor certain poets in that it would have militated against certain aspects of the genius of other poets. If strictly impartial the state would have allowed the individual genius of each poet to have full play. Sophocles employs three actors to good effect, but Euripides' genius delights in the two-actor dialogue. A two-actor limitation would thus be prejudicial to Sophocles. The desires of single poets, furthermore, varied with individual plays and the subject-matter of each. Sophocles probably found three actors adequate for the *Philoctetes* with its cast of only five characters, but for *Oedipus Rex* or *Oedipus Coloneus*, with a cast of nine and eight characters respectively, three actors would have been quite inadequate. Likewise, the requirements for the *Orestes* with a cast of ten persons are far greater than for the *Ion* or *Medea*. The cost<sup>1</sup> of pro-

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Arist. *Eg.* 537 ff.: ὁς (Κράτης) ἀπὸ συμκρᾶς δαπάνης ὑμᾶς ἀριστήζων ἀπέτεμπεν, ἀπὸ κραμβοτάτου στόματος μάτων ἀστειοτάτας ἐπινολας. The poet seems to state a fact, and the implication seems to be that Crates' plays cost less for production than those of his contemporary poets of comedy.

duction varied with individual plays. If the state dealt impartially with the poets and encouraged their art intelligently, it either set no limit at all to the number of actors that the poet could employ, or set the limit as high as five or six.

The only conceivable reason why the state should have limited the number of actors to three, rather than, e. g., to six, if such a number were desirable, would be to curtail expenses. The small number of actors available for each poet, therefore, could only have been a matter of public economy.

The solution of the question depends upon two things: (1) the economic conditions of the Athenian state during the period when the drama was under the direct supervision of the state; (2) the provision made by the state for the maintenance of dramatic performances.

The wealth<sup>1</sup> and prosperity of the Athenian state during the fifth and fourth centuries need no comment. Barring the period of the Peloponnesian War, there is no evidence that the state in the fifth century ever found it necessary to reduce appropriations for dramatic exhibitions. In this period, to be sure, we know of two measures which indicate the pinch of poverty, (1) the number of comedies was reduced from 5 to 3 from *ca.* 431-425 until some time before 388 (*supra*, p. 21, n. 2), and (2) the synchoregia was resorted to for the Dionysia in 406-5.<sup>2</sup> During the fourth century the treasury was full to overflowing.<sup>3</sup> Athens was the richest city of the ancient world. That the state was financially able to promote any enterprise for the people is patent to all. We know further that the surplus moneys of the treasury were spent upon the festivals of Dionysus even to the exclusion of other things. Demosthenes (*Phil.* i. 35) deprecates the fact that the Athenians spend more money upon their theatre than for an army or navy.<sup>4</sup> The people used their state treasury as a pleasure fund.

The state had neither desire nor motive to limit closely its expenditures for dramatic exhibitions; such evidence as we have indicates liberal, if

<sup>1</sup> For the wealth of Athens, the source of her income during the fifth century, see Xen. *Pol. Ath.* 1 and 2; Böckh *Public Economy* (Eng. trans.), pp. 632 ff.; Grote V, p. 54.

<sup>2</sup> Capps *Am. Jour. Phil.* XXVIII (1907), p. 183. *Capp. 183. in 40. Jahrh.*

<sup>3</sup> Blass *Die sozialen Zustände Athens im vierten Jahrhundert B. C.* (Kiel, 1885).

<sup>4</sup> Justinian 17.9 reflects the later tradition on the subject: in dies festos apparatusque ludorum redditus publicos effundunt et actoribus nobilissimis poetisque theatra celebrant frequentius scaenam quam castra visentes, versificatoresque meliores duces laudantes.

not extravagant, provision for them. We have no evidence for definitely determining the question whether actors were paid directly from the state treasury or by the choregus. The former seems the more probable. Doubtless many actors of private fortunes played without remuneration from any source.<sup>1</sup> If the choregus were appointed by the state to defray the expenses of the entire production, it is not likely that he received an injunction forbidding him to spend more than a certain amount. The archon seems to have been empowered to compel the choregus to come up to a certain standard, but there was no limit to the amount that choregi might spend, and we often hear of their spending unnecessarily large sums.

It was the policy of the state, therefore, to make adequate provision for dramatic performances, either directly from the treasury or indirectly by appointing as choregi rich citizens who were financially able to meet in a liberal manner all the expenses of the production.

#### V. THE EXISTENCE OF A PRACTICAL THREE-ACTOR RULE IN THE PERIOD OF THE GUILDS

Under the choregic system at Athens considerations of economy played a very insignificant rôle; they did not serve to place a restriction upon the elaboration and effectiveness with which plays were brought out. General financial depression, such as existed during the Peloponnesian War, led, it is true, to measures of economy in the production of tragedies and comedies. But, as we have seen, such measures seem to have effected only the number of plays produced, not the manner of their production. The brief resort to the synchoregia at the City Dionysia, whereby two citizens instead of one shared the expense of fitting out a chorus,<sup>2</sup> evinces the desire of the state to maintain even in a period of financial stress a high quality of dramatic representation, but without putting an excessive burden upon a single individual.

The restriction of dramatic exhibitions at Athens to certain fixed seasons left to professional actors the greater portion of the year free, thus making it possible for them to practice their art in other places. They naturally took advantage of this opportunity to supplement the honorarium received for their services in state festivals. Hence there were organized in the city under the management of certain leading actors dramatic com-

<sup>1</sup> Such is the assumption of Wolf *Proleg. ad Dem. Leptin.*, p. 93, n. 69.

<sup>2</sup> The fact should be emphasized that in this manner expense was saved to the state and to the choregi. The drama was sustained "unharmed." Aristophanes expresses the situation well in *Ran.* 406 ff.: ὥστε . . . ἀξημούς παλέειν τε καὶ χορεύειν.

panies which toured Attica and Greece in general. Such companies were not subsidized by the state<sup>1</sup> but were paid by separate communities. For the members of these voluntary associations of actors, the business was of the nature of a private venture, their financial success depending upon the number and lucrativeness of the engagements which they were able to arrange. The custom extended far back into the fourth century and also into the fifth. Plato *Legg.* viii. 817 *c* refers to traveling troupes which, in his own time, erected their booths in the market-places of cities and gave dramatic performances. Simylus and Socrates, the "Ranters" (*Dem. De cor.* 262), hire Aeschines and make trips about Attica. Aristotle (*Probl.* xxx. 10) makes the query why is it that the actors of wandering companies lead such dissolute lives. The remains of the theatre at Thoricus show evidence of fifth-century construction, and the theatre at Eretria also belongs to the fifth century. By the middle of the fourth century all the demes of Attica had their annual dramatic spectacles, and theatres were being erected in all parts of Greece.<sup>2</sup> From these facts it may be inferred that by the early part of the fourth century the custom was well established for companies to be formed at Athens for the purpose of providing the Dionysia in the demes of Attica, district fairs, and small towns throughout Greece with presentations of the great masterpieces of Athenian poets.<sup>3</sup> The companies plied the acting profession as a trade, a convenient and easy way of earning a livelihood. The motive for dramatic production in the hands of the traveling companies was to make money.<sup>4</sup> The conditions under which plays were presented by them were such as would necessarily tend to make performances less elaborate. The country communities could usually not afford an extensive or elaborate dramatic performance. While the composition of a troupe depended in a measure upon the taste and wealth of individual communities, yet it is

<sup>1</sup> There is one exception to this: the festival at Peiraeus was an event of unusual importance, and Athens contributed to the expenses and supplied many victims for sacrifice; see Haigh *op. cit.*, p. 44 and n. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Dörpfeld-Reisch *Gr. Theat.*, pp. 109, 113, 141, and Haigh, p. 44.

<sup>3</sup> The best class of actors, of course, performed in the established theatres and at the most important festivals, while actors who played probably only insignificant rôles at the city festivals started on foot, giving performances wherever they could.

<sup>4</sup> We must not forget, however, that the motives which led the various communities to give dramatic exhibitions at their festivals were quite the same as at Athens, and their motive was not to make money. They doubtless made their spectacles as grand and splendid as they could afford, but, while Athens had the money and pride to make plays ideally perfect in their presentation, the Attic towns had to economize.

probable that in most cases they put up with performances such as the manager chose to give them.<sup>1</sup>

In estimating the great changes wrought by the wandering troupes in dramatic production, three important factors must be taken into account: (1) the personal gain of the actor-manager; (2) the extra expense, which is a necessary concomitant of a traveling troupe; (3) the non-critical, crude provincial audience.<sup>2</sup> How would such conditions be likely to affect dramatic presentation?

The chorus was greatly reduced. The expense and inconvenience of traveling would naturally tend to reduce the chorus of fifteen or twenty-four members to a smaller number. The full tragic or comic chorus would entail a greater outlay of money than the provincial community could bear, besides taxing the capacity of the ordinary theatre. Seven comic choreutae are recorded in each of the four Soteric lists at Delphi<sup>3</sup> (middle of the third century). The choreutae entered in these inscriptions must have had an organic connection with the actors in the production of the comedies, and cannot have been merely dancers of interludes to fill up pauses in the action, or anything of that kind.<sup>4</sup> The number of the chorus may have varied with the importance of the festival, or may have been dispensed with entirely at the somewhat extemporaneous performances

<sup>1</sup> Of course if a festival specified a large number of actors and elaborate scenery, etc., the manager would gladly furnish these. This would be a matter of mutual agreement. The manager would be concerned only with his profits, not the number of actors. He would add any number to his troupe but raise the price proportionately. However, it is likely that a manager in the early part of the fourth century did as he pleased, since dramatic performances in the provinces were new, and the audiences were easily satisfied.

<sup>2</sup> The country audiences doubtless endured poor acting, the mutilation of texts, crude scenery, etc., that would have been intolerable to the Athenian spectator.

<sup>3</sup> In a catalogue of the second half of the second century (Baunack *SGDI.* II, No. 2569), four comic choreutae only are recorded.

<sup>4</sup> The assumption that the choreutae in these records were not acting choruses was due to the false conception that the chorus in comedy practically disappeared early in the fourth century. The chorus remained in comedy into the third century. For tragedy there is no evidence that the chorus was ever given up. Cf. Capps *Am. Jour. Arch.* X (1895), p. 287; in *Trans. Am. Philol. Ass.* XXXI (1900), p. 133, he calls attention to another significant fact which is strong evidence that the connection of the choreutae with the comic actors was organic, viz., the absence of didascali after the lists of comic choreutae. The didascalus of the actors seems to have been in charge of the chorus also. So Dracon, who figures in the accounts of the Delian *leporoiol*, was in charge of a chorus as well as actors; see A. Körite *Neue Jahrb.* V (1900), p. 84; Reisch in Pauly-Wissowa *Encyc.*, s. v. "Chor," is of the opinion that the connection between the chorus and actors was not close.

in the market-places of cities. The locality where the festival was held may have supplied mutes<sup>1</sup> to fill in, thus raising the chorus to its normal size.

The traveling troupes also doubtless dispensed largely with scenery and stage apparatus and with all unnecessary persons. The small number of characters that appear together in Greek plays gave the economical manager an excellent opportunity to reduce his company to a very small figure. The largest number of persons that engage in the dialogue at one time would determine the number of actors in a company. The text was made to conform to the convenience of the troupe, or to the caprice of the managing actor. The famous actor Theodorus is said to have altered the text of a play in order to come on in the first scene.<sup>2</sup> The law of Lycurgus, whereby only approved state copies were allowed to be performed, shows the practice of actors at this period of distorting tragic texts. This very law was aimed more especially at the heads of troupes, who must have taken great liberties with the texts in presenting plays. The Athenian audience would not have tolerated the mutilation of texts by actors, nor was it necessary to resort to such a device at the city festivals. The custom of presenting a play with three actors began with performances by traveling companies outside of Athens and was a natural outgrowth of the economic plan upon which such companies were conducted.

Organized guilds of *technitae* were formed relatively late. Poland<sup>3</sup> has pointed out that neither Aristotle nor Demosthenes speaks of the guilds by their official title *οἱ περὶ τὸν Διόνυσον τεχνῖται*. Furthermore, since Aristotle<sup>4</sup> speaks of the wandering actors in a contemptuous manner, it is extremely probable that they did not have the official standing which we know they possessed in the latter part of the fourth century. There may have been an organization of some kind at an earlier date, but it did not receive the sanction of the state. The most important guild in Greece was located at Athens.<sup>5</sup> At Thebes was also an independent

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Menander frag. 165 (Kock *CAF.* III, p. 48).

<sup>2</sup> Aristotle *Pol.* 1336 b 28; cf. also Schäfer *loc. cit.*, p. 242.

<sup>3</sup> *De col. artif. Dionys.* (1895), p. 9. The guilds have been treated also by Ziebarth *Gr. Vereinwesen*, Lpz., 1896; Müller *Bühnenall.* (1886), pp. 362 ff., Reisch *De mus. certam.* (Wien, 1885), p. 72; Sauppe *Com. de col. art. scen. Att.*, Gött. 1876; Friedländer *De artif. Dionys.*, Königsberg, 1874; Lüders *Dionys. Künstler*, Berl., 1873; Foucart *De col. scen. artif. apud Gr.*, Paris, 1873.

<sup>4</sup> *Rhet.* 1405 a 23 (iii. 2); cf. Lüders, p. 59.

<sup>5</sup> *οἱ ἐν Ἀθήναις τεχνῖται*, *CIA.* II 551. This is the oldest datable document relative to any organization of *technitae*. It refers to the latter part of the fourth century, and was inscribed after 279 b. c.; cf. Pomtow *Fleckeis. Jahrb.* 149 (1894),

synod.<sup>1</sup> In addition to the two guilds just mentioned there was in the mainland of Greece the large corporation of technitae,<sup>2</sup> which was composed of branch guilds in Thebes (*CIG.* 2485), Opus (*SGDI.* II 1502), Chalcis (*BCH.* XVI, pp. 92 ff.), and Argos (Le Bas *Argolide* 116 a). Guilds of technitae were not confined to the Greek continent. The synod at Teos was one of the most important, and the one about which we are best informed (*CIG.* 3067-71). Likewise at Ptolemais (*BCH.* IX, p. 133) and at Cyprus (*CIG.* 2619, 2620) were flourishing guilds. In all parts of the Greek-speaking world were to be found organized guilds of technitae. All musical and dramatic entertainment passed exclusively into their control.<sup>3</sup>

The customs and practices which characterized the early unorganized traveling companies were transferred to the guilds. The work of the former individual manager passed over to the officers of the union. The guilds negotiated through its representatives with cities for dramatic exhibitions. Originally, economy was the prime motive which led the wandering troupes to reduce their number to three actors, but in the course of a century or so their practices had established a fixed norm. The people had come to look upon three actors as adequate to present a play, as constituting the normal dramatic troupe. At least, the guild at

p. 500. Sauppe, p. 5, saw in the *θλαστος τῶν Μουσῶν* of Sophocles the prototype of the technitae organization, but Poland's investigation (p. 9) shows that *θλαστος* is restricted in use to organizations for the worship of gods, and is never used for secular organizations such as bands of technitae.

<sup>1</sup> τὸ κοινὸν τῶν περὶ τὸν Διένυσον τεχνιτῶν τὸ ἐν Θῆβαις, *CIG.* 2484, 2413, 2414. Poland, pp. 8 ff., endeavored to prove by the uses of *κοινὸν* and *σύνοδος* that *σύνοδος* was used only of a branch organization, while *κοινὸν* was a term by which a "Verband" or a union of many *σύνοδοι* was designated. Accordingly in Greece there existed but one *κοινὸν* which embraced both Athens and Thebes, in addition to the larger Isthmian-Nemean corporation. The same situation obtained in Asia Minor and Egypt, where one *κοινὸν* embraced all the *σύνοδοι* of those countries. His arguments are refuted by Ziebarth, p. 79, who shows that no such distinction is observed in the use of these terms.

<sup>2</sup> Whose official title was τὸ κοινὸν τῶν περὶ τὸν Διένυσον τεχνιτῶν ἐξ Ἰσθμοῦ κ. Νεμέας.

<sup>3</sup> The main motive that prompted actors to unite in a close organization was to promote their own material welfare and the interests of individual members. It has also been suggested that the purpose was to better the condition of poor traveling companies that wandered about, or perhaps the habit of making expeditions over Greece had had a pernicious effect upon actors and the status of the drama so that the state became instrumental in their formation for the purpose of restoring the drama to its sacred position and for the purpose of getting better actors for her festivals. Cf. Lüders, p. 63; Müller *Bühnenalt.*, p. 393.

Athens in the early part of the third century regarded three as the regular number for a dramatic company. For this we have positive evidence in Delphic inscriptions which give the names of the performers at the Soteria for four years, about the middle of the third century B. C. The participants in these exhibitions were furnished by the Athenian guild of artists.<sup>1</sup>

It has been shown by Capps that the names of many of the participants in the Soteria are in the contemporary agonistic lists found at Delos, and that the names of a number of comic actors who participated in the Soteria or in the Delian Apollonia are also found in the section of the Athenian Victors'-lists devoted to comic actors (*IG. II* 977). The Athenian list gives only the victorious protagonists. A tabulation of the facts regarding the comic actors who appear in the Soteric lists and a comparison of their names with those found in the Delian and Athenian inscriptions lead to the inevitable conclusion that the Delian lists also give only the protagonists (leaders of separate comic troupes), but all of them, not the victors alone, while the Delphic lists give all the persons in each troupe, not the protagonists alone. Now since the comic and tragic companies in the Soteric inscriptions all consist of three performers who are classed as *κωμῳδοί* and *τραγῳδοί*, with a trainer and flute-player for each company, we have in this one instance documentary evidence that in the period of the artists' guilds, outside of Athens at least, three actors and their assistants constituted the normal dramatic company.<sup>2</sup> But the guild was prepared to furnish more actors if necessary; the tragic troupe belonging to the Ptolemais guild consisted of one *τραγῳδός* and four *συναγωνισταί*, *Ditt. Orient. Gr. Inst.*, No. 51.

The literary evidence for a three-actor law for this period may be disposed of briefly. It should be observed at this point that nowhere is it explicitly stated that three actors were used to perform a play. However, there are several passages in late writers which indicate that, in the writer's time, or conceivably, in the writer's opinion, even in the classical period, the usual number of actors employed in the production of a play was three. These passages may be classified as follows: (1) Actors are spoken of as appearing in more than one rôle in the same play. It is not implied, however, that three actors carried all the rôles, but only that doubling of

<sup>1</sup> Sauppe *Com. de collegiis scen.*, p. 10. I use the text of Baunack *SGDI. II* 2563-66, with the improvements suggested by Capps *Trans. Am. Phil. Ass.* XXXI (1900), pp. 124 ff.

<sup>2</sup> The details of this matter the writer expects to give later in an article, "The Number of the Dramatic Company in the Period of the Technitae."

rôles was practiced.<sup>1</sup> (2) The invention of the term “parachoregema” in application to an “extra,” i. e., a fourth speaking actor, is based upon the idea of an “extra expense.” If more than three actors were employed no such extra expense would be involved by the use of a fourth speaking person on the scene. The use of the term therefore implies, for the period in which it occurs, the usual limitation to three of the number of actors employed.<sup>2</sup> (3) In a few passages the classification of actors into three classes implies a limitation of their number in a performance.<sup>3</sup> That such dramatic companies of three belong to the period of the actors’ guilds, or are traveling troupes under the management of the *rex gregis* or protagonist, is evidenced, not only by the uniformly late date of the notices themselves, but also by incidental allusions in these notices that admit of no other explanation.

<sup>1</sup> Lucian *Necyom.* 16: the actor who has been playing the rôle of a king *μετ’ δόλιγου οικέτης προῆλθεν, ὑπὸ τοῦ ποιητοῦ κεκέλευμένος.* Aristides I, p. 351 Dind.: *στρατιώτης μετεοκεύασται ὡς ἀρτίως ἦν γεωργός.* Schol. Aesch. *Choephr.* 899: *μετεοκεύασται ὁ ἔξαγγελος εἰς Πυλάδην, ἵνα μὴ δ’ λέγωσιν.* Schol. Eur. *Phoen.* 93 states that Antigone does not appear with the Paedagogue at 88, because time must be given for the protagonist (who as Iocasta has spoken the prologue, exit 87) to reappear as Antigone (enter *ca.* 100). But only two persons are present in this scene. The scholiast evidently feels that the leading actor should carry the part of both Antigone and Iocasta. This may have been the practice in his day. Schol. Soph. *O. T.* 147 explains the exit of the Priest at this point: besides having finished his business, he must leave *ὑπὲρ τοῦ χώραν εἶναι ἐτέρῳ ὑποκριτῷ.* But in the following scene only two are present; the actor of the Priest would not be needed until 316.

<sup>2</sup> It occurs, of a fourth speaking actor, only three times: Poll. iv. 109, *εἰ δὲ τέταρτος ὑποκριτής παραφθέγξατο, τοῦτο παραχορήγημα ὀνομάζεται;* schol. Aesch. *Prom.* 12 Bia is called a “parachoregema,” and in schol. Aristoph. *Pax.* 114 the children of Trygaeus. In the other two occurrences of the word it is used for non-speaking supernumeraries (Areopagites) or supplementary chorus (Frogs). That *παραχορήγημα* is derived from *χορηγεῖν* in its derived non-technical sense of “spend” and was applied to the presentation of plays in the commercial period of the guilds, I have tried to show in *Classical Philology* II, pp. 387 ff. The extensive use of the term is modern.

<sup>3</sup> The three actors according to schol. Dem. *De pace* 58. 6 (above, p. 34, n. 3) were, in classical times, *ὑποκριτής, δευτεραγωνιστής, and τριταγωνιστής;* later on *τραγῳδός or κωμῳδός* replaced *ὑποκριτής* as the designation of the protagonist. This seems to be the gist of the meaning of the corrupt passage; the first statement, as we have seen, does not hold good for the classical period. Pollux iv. 124 (above, p. 32, n. 3) assigns the three doors of the *scena* to the protagonist, deuteragonist, and *τὸ εὐτελέστατον πρόσωπον;* but the third phrase, and the fact that the rôle of king, who used the central door, was often not borne by the leading actor, suggests that he had in mind the significance of the doors in relation to characters—as indeed Vitruvius v. 6. 3 makes clear. Plotinus iii. 2 (above, p. 32, n. 4) also seems to refer to the limited number three, and this may be true also of other references which have been given on pp. 32 ff., *passim.*

Plutarch *Mor.* 816 *f* (above, p. 32, n. 1) speaks of the humble bearing on the stage of a famous protagonist, a Theodorus or a Polus, toward the cheap “hireling” who carried the third rôle, if the latter happened to play the king.<sup>1</sup> So Pollux iv. 124 (above, p. 32, n. 3) speaks of the “cheapest” rôle after referring to protagonist and deuteragonist. We are at once struck by the resemblance of the custom here referred to, of the protagonist hiring his troupe, to that to which Demosthenes alludes when he refers to the traveling company of which Aeschines was a member. The organization under which the dramas were brought out at Athens in the fifth and fourth centuries, the provision made for supplying the needs of the poet-manager, were of an entirely different nature. Sophocles and Euripides did not write their plays with reference to the purely economic or commercial conditions under which plays were represented by the privately managed traveling troupes or the troupes sent out on the road by the guilds. Later writers knew at first hand only these later conditions, and were acquainted with the earlier conditions only through antiquarian studies.

Scholars have employed documents of the *technitae* period, particularly the Soteric inscriptions, as evidence for similar conditions at Athens in the classical period; they have used the *technitae* rule of three, a non-Athenian institution, to prove an Athenian institution; they have applied statements of late writers to Athenian practices of the fifth century; they have made no distinction between the different circumstances under which in various localities plays were brought out in these different periods. But we are not justified in transferring to the early Athenian drama the practices of actors’ guilds, which grew up under wholly different conditions. This would be as unreasonable and as unscientific as not to distinguish between the performances of the early Elizabethan Interludes by strolling companies and those of the fully developed drama of Shakespeare and his contemporaries in London theatres. The different conditions under which plays of this period (1550–1650) were produced are clearly reflected in the dramas themselves. A brief consideration of the dramatic productions of the Elizabethan period will enable one to appreciate more fully the enormous effect that different economic conditions must have had upon dramatic production in antiquity.

Fortunately we have accurate data<sup>2</sup> on the production of the Elizabethan

<sup>1</sup> We think of the parasite in *Alciphron Ep.* iii. 35 who was hired by Lexiphanes to play the part of servant in his troupe; only Lexiphanes is represented as the poet and not as the protagonist.

<sup>2</sup> The main source of my information has been the plays of the period. I have also found very serviceable Chambers *Mediaeval Stage*, Vol. II, and especially Collier *History of English Poetry*, Vol. III.

strolling companies and the economic conditions under which they conducted their trade. According to the custom of the time noblemen<sup>1</sup> had their own players as retainers. Under this arrangement the actors received a certain fee annually, but, when not needed at court, were permitted to take the road. They thus traveled on foot from village to village, from country-seat to country-seat, receiving uncertain rewards for their exhibitions. The income from performances outside of the metropolis was very meager. Henslowe<sup>2</sup> stipulates with his "hirelings" that should the company go into the country they should play at half price. The same motive that led to the reduction of wages of individual actors also led to the division of the companies when tours were made into the provinces. This conclusion is based on the fact that the average troupe of the noblemen was composed of ten or twelve persons, while the normal traveling troupe was four or five.

The new conditions under which plays were given reacted upon the structure of the drama. The long cyclical Miracles, which demanded a very large number of performers, were gradually supplanted by the Interlude. The Interlude dealt ordinarily with short episodes, required a comparatively small cast, and was far more practical and easy of representation. It was written especially to meet the demands of the small troupe, since economy in traveling and the inconvenience of crowding the hall or private house both operated to put a limit to the number of performers.

Four men<sup>3</sup> and a boy constituted the normal traveling troupe. A very considerable number of the extant Interludes contain lists of *dramatis personae* accompanied by an indication as to how, by the doubling of rôles, the cast may be brought within reasonable compass. This method began with the Craxton<sup>4</sup> play of the Sacrament, which has twelve parts, but "IX may play it at ease." Bales *Three Laws* claims to require five actors, and the *Lusty Juventus*<sup>5</sup> only four. Scores of the early Elizabethan

<sup>1</sup> See Collier *loc. cit.*, p. 440.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Collier, pp. 85 and 438. The diary of Philip Henslowe begins *ca.* 1570 and is one of the most important sources for the stage of this period.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. *Sir Thomas Moore: A Morality* (Shakespeare Society, p. 56). A player enters to make a bargain with Moore to furnish a performance for his guests. Moore: "How manie are ye?" i. e., in your troupe. Player: "Foure men and a boy, Sir." Moore: "But one boy? Then, I see there 's but few women in the play." Player: "Three, my Lord, Dame Science, Lady Vanitie, and Wisdom she herself." Moore: "And one boy play them all? bi'r lady, hee's loden."

<sup>4</sup> Manly *Pre-Shakespearean Drama* I, p. 276.

<sup>5</sup> Dodsley's *Old Eng. Plays* (Hazlitt, Vol. II)

Interludes have similar indications, as, for instance, *New Custom*<sup>1</sup> (1573), "eleven parts divided for foure actors;" *Trial of Treasure* (1567), the rôles arranged for five actors, i. e., four men and a boy; *Like Will to Like* (Hazlitt, Vol. III) has the same arrangement; *Life and Repentaunce of Mary Magdalene* (1566) has fourteen characters, but "Foure may easily play this Interlude."<sup>2</sup> Many of the Moralities were also contrived for six actors: *Wit and Wisdom* (1579), a cast of nineteen characters; *The Story of King Daryus* (Brandl *Quellen des weltlichen Dramas*, p. 358), twenty characters, "syxe persons may easily play it;" *History of Horestes*, twenty-four persons "divided for vi to playe;" *The Conflict of Conscience* (1581), "the actors' names, divided into six parts most convenient for such as be disposed either to shew this comedie in private houses or otherwise." The comedy *Miscedorus* (1598), fifteen characters, "eight persons may easily play it;" *The Fayre Mayde of Exchange*, twenty-two rôles, "eleaven may easily acte this comedy;" *Cambises* (Manly, p. 16), thirty-seven characters arranged for eight actors.

These examples suffice to show the situation. It was expensive as well as inconvenient for a large troupe of actors to travel. The country audience was small and poor, and there was no public hall or private house suitable for large companies. Thus it became necessary to reduce each company to the smallest possible number. This necessity gave rise to the Interlude, which was written and contrived to meet the economic conditions and convenience of the traveling companies. The reduction of performers and consequently the doubling of parts was the direct and necessary result of the material conditions under which the companies plied their profession.

The formula on the title-page of many of the plays, "foure or syxe may or can play it," was of course a direct appeal to managers of strolling companies, but it also implies that a larger number of actors would be desirable. In fact, we know that in many London and court performances of Interludes the doubling of rôles was rare. In the court performance Lly's *Campaspe*<sup>3</sup> (1584) the companies were united, thus avoiding the doubling of parts. When economy was not an important item and other practical matters did not interfere, parts were never doubled.

The custom of combining parts for one actor ceased almost entirely

<sup>1</sup> Dodsley's *Old Eng. Plays* (Hazlitt, Vol. III).

<sup>2</sup> Edited by Carpenter (Chicago, 1903), who says in his Introduction: "'Foure' is probably a misprint for 'five,' since in vss. 423-812, 1629-1867 five speaking characters are on the scene at once."

<sup>3</sup> Gayley *Representative Eng. Comedies*.

with Shakespeare and his contemporaries. In a preliminary page of the great First Folio of Shakespeare's plays are enumerated the names of the actors that composed his company. Including himself there are twenty-six men. This would, of course, make the practice unnecessary to any great extent. Besides the actors in his regular company, Shakespeare doubtless had a very large number of apprentices and supernumeraries who could be called upon for minor rôles.

Shakespeare's activity was confined almost exclusively to the metropolis; here his actors lived; and, as is true of all local and stock companies, the expense and inconvenience of traveling was not a consideration. Success in financing his company and the large patronage of the city put Shakespeare's company upon an economical basis totally different from that of traveling companies.

The same principle may be illustrated in the modern stage conditions of England and America. Practically no theatre in either of these countries is worked today on any but the capitalist principle. The theatrical manager's first and last aim is naturally to secure the highest possible remuneration for his invested capital. He has no objection to the artistic drama, provided he can draw substantial profit from it, but his object is to benefit his purse. The pleasure that carries farthest and brings to him the largest paying audience is his ideal stock-in-trade. The practical manager, in seeking pecuniary profit from his ventures, naturally strives to get plays that may be economically staged; he employs good or bad actors in proportion as it will increase or diminish the sale of tickets. He must conduct his business on a sound financial basis. Thus when the company leaves the large city for an extended tour over the states, to avoid the heavy financial risks involved in the transportation of a large troupe, the size of the original company is usually greatly reduced; all extras and unnecessary are left behind; the scenery is not so elaborate; rarely is a play so well staged in the town or small city as in the larger city. The manager dispenses with everything that does not materially affect the production of his play. Compare our theatre, financed by money-getting individuals, with the great theatres of Europe. The *Comédie Française* was established by a king; the Paris opera runs behind every year, notwithstanding the large annual subsidy from the state; the theatres of Austria and Germany were founded and are protected by royal favor. At least two dozen theatres in the German Empire are endowed by the Emperor. Smaller princes help; public taxes are used for the drama. What has been the result? The facts speak for themselves. A comparison of the drama of England and America with that of Europe shows the pernicious effect of a com-

mercialized stage. When and where has the acted drama ever reached its height without some non-commercial backing?

In modern times and in the Elizabethan period economy and convenience have determined the manner of dramatic production. What happens in one age may happen in any other under like conditions. The practices of the strolling companies of the Elizabethan period bears a striking resemblance to the wandering troupes of Greece in so far as our knowledge of these troupes extends; the fully developed drama at London to the Athenian drama of the classical period, to the advantage of the latter. The parallel proves nothing, but is interesting as showing that the laws of economy in similar situations produce like results in all ages.

#### VI. A REDISTRIBUTION OF THE RÔLES IN SELECTED PLAYS

It was my original plan that the constructive part of this treatise should be a redistribution of the rôles in all the plays in accordance with principles suggested in Section IV. Obviously such an undertaking would be futile and worthless so far as it should propose to represent with any degree of exactness what actually took place in the classical period at Athens. Only the professional Greek stage-manager, thoroughly conversant with the personality and capacity of his actors, would be competent to arrange the staging of each individual play. The versatility of individual actors would determine in some cases the doubling of parts, and many other considerations would have to be taken into account in specific cases. Each manager would distribute the parts in individual cases according to the material at his disposal. Even expert managers might not agree on certain details. However, it has seemed advisable to make a division of rôles in a few plays as a means of illustrating certain principles which I follow, and which I am convinced are of universal application in the grouping of characters to be assigned to one actor. In the absence of positive evidence from antiquity there is perhaps no better method of ascertaining the probable practice of the Greeks in this regard than to refer to the practice of modern managers. In the ordinary modern play, as produced in the best theatres, there is practically no doubling of parts. It is not uncommon, however, in Shakespearean performances for one actor to impersonate more than one character.<sup>1</sup> The same actor frequently plays Polonius and first Grave-digger in *Hamlet*. The two

<sup>1</sup> Sometimes in *Macbeth* Duncan and the Physician are combined. Everything would favor such a doubling. Duncan is murdered early in the play; the Physician comes on only once at the end of the play, in a night scene, and speaks but a few words.

characters are so admirably adapted to the same type of an actor that a performer for each part is quite unnecessary and would be an economic waste. I recall several recent productions of Shakespeare by the Ben Greet players of London. His company of twenty-seven actors would present *Henry II*, which has a cast of some forty characters. Mr. Greet managed his company strictly on a money-making basis, and was not disposed to employ an extra actor if one actor could play more than one rôle well. An actor would frequently carry some three or four parts, but minor parts such as messengers, forfesters, and other insignificant rôles. Characters that appeared but once, whose presence upon the stage was farthest apart, and those whose makeup and costumes were quite different, were combined that the spectator might not detect that the same one was impersonating two or more different characters. This is a most important consideration. In serious drama the audience must not be conscious that one actor is playing two parts, for this destroys the illusion and thus detracts from the effect. It cannot be avoided, however, if an actor is on the stage very much. Hence the important parts of a play are never doubled, nor those characters of marked personalities, or of peculiar physical characteristics.

To what extent the custom of combining parts prevailed at Athens in the classical period cannot be determined. But it is quite unnecessary in many plays to assume a separate actor for each part, and in some cases it would seem to be sheer economic waste, for unimportant characters may frequently be doubled without causing offense to the audience, or even in such a manner as to escape notice. On the other hand, it is reasonably certain that there were scores of second-grade actors and apprentices in the profession at Athens who were available for minor rôles. All actors begin by playing minor parts, and doubtless as apprentices they regarded it as a special favor and a distinction to play a part at the Great Festival. In view of this, it seems unlikely that the habit of doubling parts existed to any great extent, if at all.

In the plays chosen for illustration, I proceed on the assumption that a manager would use at least a sufficient number of actors to produce his play in a creditable fashion, but that he might desire to double rôles where the effect would not be bad. Accordingly, only such rôles are grouped as seem peculiarly adapted to one actor. The following principles are thus observed, with a degree of flexibility to suit individual cases:

1. The combination of male and female rôles is to be avoided.
2. Only characters of like age should be grouped; at least it is important to avoid doubling extremes in age.

3. Important characters in a play require separate actors for each.

4. Other characters whose personalities are not too keenly delineated may be doubled under the following conditions: (a) if the order of appearance of the characters is supplementary; (b) if these characters are not of too miscellaneous a nature; (c) if their appearances upon the scene are far apart; (d) if, finally, the doubling would escape the attention of the audience.

### ELECTRA OF SOPHOCLES

#### DISTRIBUTION FOR THREE ACTORS

1	Electra	86-1384; 1395-1507	Total vv. 644
2	Orestes	1-85; 1098-1375; 1421-1440; 1465-1507	Total vv. 269
	Clytaemestra	516-803	
	Chrysothemis	328-471; 871-1057	
3	Paedagogus	1-85; 660-803; 1325-1375	Total vv. 341
	Aegisthus	144-1510	

#### DISTRIBUTION FOR FOUR ACTORS

1	Electra	Total vv. 644
2	Clytaemestra	Total vv. 267
	Chrysothemis	
3	Orestes	Total vv. 159
4	Paedagogus	Total vv. 184
	Aegisthus	

The division among four actors is by no means perfect, but it avoids the doubling of male and female rôles. I am not sure that a manager would not have used even a fifth actor in this play. Certainly Clytaemestra and Chrysothemis would require separate actors under any modern system of stage management. The bold, resolute queen, and the wavering, amenable girl are quite different in character. The order of their appearance upon the scene would also favor the employment of another actor: Chrysothemis 328-471; Clytaemestra 516-803; Chrysothemis 871-1057. The impersonator of the aged Paedagogus could easily play the unimportant part of Aegisthus. The doubling of Chrysothemis' part and that of the aged Paedagogus would be intolerable. The employment of a fourth actor, then, would be necessary, a fifth desirable.

### OEDIPUS TYRANNUS

#### DISTRIBUTION<sup>1</sup> FOR THREE ACTORS

1	Oedipus		Total vv. 646
	Priest	1-57	
2	Teiresias	300-462	Total vv. 268
	Iocasta	634-862; 911-1072	
	Servant of Laius	1123-1185	

<sup>1</sup> My distribution is the same as that of Hermann, Richter, and Lachmann except that they assigned to the second actor also the part of the Exangelus.

3	Creon Messenger Exangelus	87-150; 513-677; 1422-1523 924-1085; 1110-1185 1225-1296	Total vv. 260
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## DISTRIBUTION FOR FIVE ACTORS

1	Oedipus	Total vv. 646
2	Iocasta	Total vv. 122
3	Creon	Total vv. 133
4	Teiresias Priest Servant of Laius	Total vv. 146
5	Messenger Exangelus	Total vv. 127

The combination of Iocasta's rôle with that of the Priest, Servant of Laius, or Exangelus, is obviously inappropriate. A separate actor is desirable for the part, and, indeed, an actor of considerable psychological insight is necessary to interpret it. About the other characters I am not so sure. The Priest might be combined with Teiresias to which may also be joined the Old Servant who appears at the end of the play. The three characters are, to be sure, quite different, especially does the Old Servant require a different style of play, but the part is not long. Old age is common to all, and one voice with slight variation would fit. The Priest and Teiresias are admirably suited to the same actor so far as doubling is ever desirable. An actor of ordinary versatility could also, I think, play the Old Shepherd successfully. The parts are supplementary, Priest (1-157); Teiresias (300-462); Servant (1123-1185). The Messenger and Exangelus are of the same type and may be doubled.

Every character in the *Oedipus* is, in my judgment, marked by a distinct individuality, and the ideal distribution would be an actor for every part. In this case a satisfactory assignment of the parts would require a minute analysis of each character with reference to the physical qualities and mental disposition best adapted to interpret that part.

## OEDIPUS COLONEUS

## DISTRIBUTION FOR THREE ACTORS

1	Oedipus	1-1555		Total vv. 704
	Messenger	1580-1670		
	Theseus	1751-1779		
2	Antigone	1-504; 720-846; 1099-1555; 1670-1779		Total vv. 247
	Theseus	887-1043		
3	Stranger	36-80		Total vv. 419.
	Ismene	324-590; 1096-1555; 1670-1779		
	Theseus	551-667; 1099-1210; 1500-1555		
	Creon	728-1043		
	Polyneices	1254-1446		

## DISTRIBUTION FOR SIX ACTORS

1	Oedipus	Total vv. 600
2	Theseus	Total vv. 200
3	Antigone	Total vv. 169
4	Ismene	Total vv. 69
5	Creon Messenger	Total vv. 178
6	Polyneices Stranger	

Thus a three-actor distribution necessitates the division of Theseus' rôle (*supra*, p. 45). Wecklein<sup>1</sup> increases the difficulty by splitting Ismene's part also. Teuffel *Rhein. Mus.* N. F. IX, p. 137, suggested that the supernumerary that played the part of Ismene from 1076 to 1555 also represented her from 1670 to end, thus making it possible for the third actor to play the Messenger and Theseus in the last scene. This would simplify the situation somewhat, but does not avoid the introduction of a fourth actor. A "parachoregema" in such a case is merely another name for a fourth actor. The distinction commonly drawn between "hypocritēs" and "parachoregema" is a modern invention due to an assumed theory that only three "hypocraite" could be used in the presentation of a play. No such distinction existed in the classical period; "hypocritēs" was applicable to any performer that played a speaking part.<sup>2</sup>

It seems quite unreasonable to suppose that the *Oedipus Coloneus* was originally actually produced with three actors even if, by the exercise of ingenuity, it was possible to do it. Such an artificial arrangement forces the leading actor, who was presumably a man of marked personality, and who is continually upon the scene to 1555, to retire at this point, change dress, and reappear at 1580 in the character of the Messenger, i. e., within twenty-five verses. Soon after the exit of the Messenger the same actor must come on as Theseus. The part would evidently be overloaded, exceeding 700 verses, while the other actors have about 680 together.

The impersonator of Antigone 1-846, within forty verses appears in the part of Theseus 887-1043, reappears as Antigone 1099-1779. Such a doubling is especially inappropriate.

The third actor must play the following characters in the order indicated: Stranger 36-80; Ismene 324-509; Theseus 551-667; Creon 728-1043; Theseus

<sup>1</sup> *Oed. Col.*, Einl., p. 8; he distributes the rôles thus: I. Oedipus, Ismene 1670 to end. II. Stranger, Ismene to 507, Theseus except 887-1043, Creon, Polyneices, Messenger. III. Antigone, Theseus 887-1043. IV. Ismene (mute) 1096-1555.

<sup>2</sup> In modern times our term "actor" is not restricted to a speaking person; even a mute may be called "actor." In the classical period at Athens this seems not to have been the case; cf. Welcker *Aeschylus Trilogie*, p. 118: "Nur das Sprechen den Schauspieler macht;" Hippocrates: ὡς γὰρ ἔκεινοι (mutes) σχῆμα μὲν καὶ στολὴν καὶ πρόσωπον ὑποκριτῶν ἔχουσιν, οὐκ εἰσὶ δὲ ὑποκριταί.

1099-1210; Polyneices 1254-1446; Theseus 1500-55; Ismene 1670-1779. The constant alternating between the part of Theseus, Ismene, and the other characters makes a very undesirable combination for one actor.

Attention has been called in another place (*supra*, p. 46) to the objections to the splitting of Theseus' part. To sum up: The over-burdening of the part of the protagonist, the necessity of grouping unsuitable characters for each actor, and the interlaced order in which these characters appear, the division of Theseus' part, will convince the fair-minded person that three actors are quite inadequate for even a poor production of the play.

In the six-actor distribution, I have doubled the parts whose appearance upon the scene are farthest apart. The spectator would be less likely to detect that the same actor was playing two or more rôles. With five actors the manager would probably double the parts of Theseus and Stranger for one actor, Creon, Polyneices, and Messenger for another. An apprentice probably played Ismene.

### IPHIGENEIA AT AULIS

#### DISTRIBUTION FOR THREE ACTORS

1	Iphigeneia	607-690; 1211-1510	Total vv. 397
	Old Man	1-163; 303-318; 855-896	
	Messenger I	414-439	
	Messenger II	1532-1613	
2	Clytaemestra	607-750; 801-1035; 1098-1626	Total vv. 376
	Menelaus	303-542	
3	Agamemnon	1-163; 317-543; 607-750;	Total vv. 487
	Achilles	1106-1275; 1621-1626 801-1035; 1345-1433	

#### DISTRIBUTION FOR FIVE ACTORS

1	Iphigeneia	Total vv. 222
2	Agamemnon	Total vv. 326
3	Clytaemestra	Total vv. 279.
4	Old Man	Total vv. 175
	1st Messenger	
	2d Messenger	
5	Menelaus	Total vv. 258
	Achilles	

In the division for five actors several objectionable features of the three-actor scheme are avoided, such as the forcing of one actor to play Old Man 1-63, then Messenger I 414-39, Iphigeneia 607-90, Old Man again 855-96, Iphigeneia 1211-1510, and, finally, Messenger II 1532-1613. The constant change of an actor from the Messenger and Old Man would be ridiculous, and no decent performance of the play would tolerate such an ineptitude. Agamemnon's character is revealed in subtle moods and situations which render the part difficult to interpret. His desponding anxiety and wavering mind, the struggle between filial affection and patriotism, the fear of a wife's anger and the army's, demand an

actor of versatility and psychological insight. The chivalrous and natural part of Achilles would thus be ill-suited to the actor of Agamemnon, especially since the rôles are interlaced thus: Agamemnon 607-750; Achilles 801-1035; Agamemnon 1106-1275; Achilles 1345-1433; Agamemnon 1621-26. One actor may play Menelaus and Achilles since Menelaus appears only early in the play. The attitude of Menelaus in the latter part of the scene when he offers his hand in cordial spirit and refuses to be a party to the death of the maiden would put the actor in the proper mood to come on as Achilles later in the play.

The Old Man and Messenger may be grouped, if necessary. The unsuitable combination of rôles in subordinate characters would not be so noticeable as in the more prominent personages.

### ORESTES

#### DISTRIBUTION FOR THREE ACTORS

1	Orestes <sup>1</sup>	1-806; 1018-1245, 1345-1347; 1506-1693	Total vv. 452
2	Electra	1-315; 844-1352	Total vv. 472
	Menelaus	356-716; 1554-1693	
3	Pylades	729-806; 1018-1245; 356-716; 1554-1693	Total vv. 537
	Hermione	71-125; 1323-1352	
	Helena	71-125	
	Tyndareus <sup>1</sup>	470-629	
	Messenger	832-956	
	Phrygian	1389-1536	
	Apollo	1625-1693	

#### DISTRIBUTION FOR SEVEN ACTORS

1	Orestes	Total vv. 452
2	Electra	Total vv. 324
3	Menelaus	Total vv. 148
4	Pylades	Total vv. 112
5	Phrygian	Total vv. 140
6	Tyndareus	Total vv. 234
	Messenger	
	Apollo	
7	Helena	Total vv. 50
	Hermione	

The economy of the play permits the doubling of the rôles of Orestes and Menelaus, but the combination is undesirable for many reasons: Orestes' part is already heavy and the addition of the Messenger's rôles would overload it. There is the further objection offered by Richter (p. 50) that it is not permissible for the protagonist to play intervening parts when his part extends to the end of

<sup>1</sup> Hermann (p. 54) adds Messenger to part of Orestes, transfers Menelaus to the tritagonist. Richter has the same arrangement as offered in the table except that he considers Pylades as the inseparable companion of Orestes, and so assumes a "parachoregema" for the part.

the play, as in this case, Orestes 1-806; Messenger 832-956; Orestes 1018 to end. This pause should give the actor a few minutes of rest. The sudden shift from Orestes to Messenger (806-32) increases the difficulty. The spectator could not fail to see Orestes in the rôles of the Messenger. As indicated in the three-actor distribution, one actor plays Electra and Menelaus.

Both parts are important and are so interwoven that the combination would be very offensive; Electra 1-315; Menelaus 356-716; Electra 844-1352; Menelaus 1554-1693. Pylades and Menelaus might be grouped, but this would require a "lightning change" of costume, i. e., during 716-25. The Phrygian demands a separate actor. The part is meant to be humorous, and has many lyrical verses. The part, therefore, bears a striking resemblance to the Fools of Shakespeare. The peculiar characteristics of the Phrygian make doubling with other rôles impossible.<sup>1</sup> This has been observed by Richter (p. 61): "Die Rolle des Phryx passt schlecht zu den übrigen." Helena and Hermione are not very important and may have been played by a young apprentice.

The part of the blustering Old Man would be ill-suited for combination with other rôles if he were upon the scene very much, but he appears only once (470-629). The Messenger who is present 832-956 corresponds in age to Tyndareus. Both parts demand spirited acting, the Messenger must give a vivid, spirited narrative in declamatory style, while Tyndareus' wrath calls for a "ranting" delivery. Hence an actor with little versatility could adapt his mood to both parts. The same actor might impersonate Apollo (1675-1693).

### PHOENISSAE

#### DISTRIBUTION FOR THREE ACTORS

1	Creon	697-783; 834-985; 1310-1682	Total vv. 429
	Iocasta	1-87; 301-637; 1072-1283	
2	Antigone	88-201; 1265-1283; 1485-1763	Total vv. 394
	Polyneices	261-637	
	Menoeceus	834-1018	Total vv. 645
3	Paedagogus	88-201	
	Eteocles	446-637; 690-783	
	Teiresias	834-959	
	Messenger	1067-1283, 1335-1480	
	Oedipus	1539-1763	

#### DISTRIBUTION FOR SEVEN ACTORS

1	Iocasta	Total vv. 280
2	Messenger	Total vv. 298
3	Antigone	Total vv. 220
4	Creon	Total vv. 149
5	Eteocles	Total vv. 121

<sup>1</sup> The actors of Fools' parts in Shakespeare must be clever and in a manner versatile, but I have never seen one that could interpret a serious part well.

6	{ Polyneices Menoceus	{ Total vv. 174
7	{ Paedagogus Teiresias Oedipus	{ Total vv. 226

A versatile actor might have played both Eteocles and Messenger, if a seventh actor were not available. Obviously rôles so widely different as those of Creon and Iocasta should not be grouped.

## ACHARNIANS

DISTRIBUTION FOR THREE ACTORS<sup>1</sup>

1	{ Dicaeopolis	1-102; 237-625; 716-833; 864-970; 1003-1142; 1198-1231
2	{ Persian Ambassador Theorus Euripides	65-125 134-166 407-479
2	Lamachus	572-622; 1072-1142; 1090-1226
	Megarian	729-835
	Boeotian	860-954
	Farmer	1018-1036
3	{ Amphitheus Daughter of Dicaeopolis Sycophant	45-129; 176-203 245-46 818-827
3	Nicarchus	910-956
3	Servant of Euripides	395-402
3	Servant of Lamachus	959-965; 1174-1189
	Paranymph	1048-1057
	Messenger	1085-1094

## DISTRIBUTION FOR SEVEN ACTORS

1	Dicaeopolis	
2	{ Amphitheus Euripides	
2	Lamachus	
3	{ Megarian Boeotian	
3	Farmer	
3	Pseudartabas	
4	{ Ambassador Sycophant	
4	Theorus	
5	{ Paranymph Messenger	
5	Herald	
6	{ Servant of Lamachus Servant of Euripides	
7	{ Daughter of Dicaeopolis Nicarchus	

<sup>1</sup> No three-actor distribution can include Herald 43-173; 1000-02; 1070-77; Pseudartabas 100-104, and the two daughters of the Megarian.

With less than five actors the Acharnians could not have been produced (*supra*, p. 44). That it could be produced with five assumes that the Persian Ambassador can retire, change dress, and reappear in the character of Theorus during vv. 129-34. It would not have been possible to effect the change in so short a time. Separate actors, therefore, are required for Dicaeopolis, Herald, Ambassador, Pseudartabas, Amphitheus, and Theorus. No one of these actors would be suitable for the part of the dwarf, Nicarchus, who is characterized 909 as *μικρός γα μάκος οὗτος*. The impersonator of this rôle must be of small stature. Probably a boy was used, who would also fit the part of Dicaeopolis' daughter. For the two daughters of the Megarian supernumeraries were used, or, as Beer suggests, the same person that played Nicarchus and the daughter of Dicaeopolis. These seven performers could render a creditable presentation of the play.

### FROGS

#### DISTRIBUTION FOR FOUR ACTORS

1	Dionysus	3-673; 832-1481
2	Xanthias	1-664; 739-808
	Aeschylus	840-1465; 1515-1523
3	Heracles	38-164
	Charon	180-270
3	Janitor	465-478; 605-673; 738-813,
	Euripides	830-1476
	Boarding-house Keeper	548-78
4	Dead Man	173-177
	Attendant of Persephone	503-521
4	Plathane	551-571
	Pluto	1411-1480, 1500-1527

#### DISTRIBUTION FOR SIX ACTORS<sup>1</sup>

1	Dionysus	
2	Xanthias	
	Pluto	
3	Aeschylus	
4	Euripides	
5	Heracles	
	Charon	
	Janitor	
6	Dead Man	
	Attendant of Persephone	
	Boarding-house Keeper	

### LYSISTRATA

#### DISTRIBUTION FOR FOUR ACTORS

1	Lysistrata	1-253; 431-613; 706-780; 829-64; 1106-1189; 1273 ff.
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<sup>1</sup> The part of Plathane could have been played by a supernumerary, or by any one of the actors who was not at the time engaged.

	Calonice	6-253
	Cinesias	845-1013
2	Old Woman A	439-613
	Young Woman A	728-80
	Athenian Ambassador A	1216-1241; 1086-1189
	Myrrhina	69-253; 837-951
	Proboulus	387-613
3	Young Woman B	735-780
	Old Woman B	439-613
	Athenian Ambassador B	1225-1322
	Lampito	78-244
4	Spartan Herald	980-1013
	Young Woman C	742-780
	Spartan Ambassador	1074-1189; 1225-1322
Supernumerary, Old Woman C		447-449

## DISTRIBUTION FOR SEVEN ACTORS

1	Lysistrata
2	Calonice
	Old Woman A
	Young Woman A
	Myrrhina
3	Old Woman B
	Young Woman B
	Lampito
4	Old Woman C
	Young Woman C
	Proboulus
5	Ambassador B
	Cinesias
	Ambassador A
7	Spartan Herald
	Ambassador

Four actors could present this play, but with such a distribution each actor must carry important male and female rôles. Two sets of actors would therefore be desirable. With six actors, the manager would probably combine Lampito, Spartan Herald, and the Spartan Ambassador, since it is not probable that many of the actors could render the Spartan dialect effectively. The very insignificant parts of Old Woman C and Young Woman C could be played by supernumeraries, or by the actors of Cinesias and of the Proboulus.

Four actors could also play the *Thesmophoriazusae* under the following arrangement: One actor plays the part of Kedestes; a second, Euripides 1-279, 871-927, 1056-1132, 1160-1209; Micca 295-764; a third, Agathon 95-265; Anonymous Woman 295-764; Cleisthenes 574-654; Critylla 758-935; a fourth plays Servant of Agathon 39-69; Prytanis 929-44; Heraldess 295-380; Scythian (929-947) 1001-1225. The only serious objection to the four-actor distribution is that one actor must play Euripides and Micca. A fifth would, therefore,

be better. The Heraldess and Scythian are quite different but the doubling parts is permissible since the Heraldess has a very insignificant part. Agathon and Cleisthenes are represented as very effeminate and may be combined with Critylla.

In conclusion the writer would express the hope that this essay may do something toward discrediting a tradition which has not served to enhance our pleasure in the great masterpieces of the Greek drama. The three-actor law has furnished many scholars with intellectual amusement in the game of combination and permutation allowed by the given scheme, but their labors have not brought us nearer to a sympathetic appreciation of the great characters portrayed in the plays. Such efforts stand rather as a barrier to the full enjoyment of them. It is, indeed, a convincing proof of the overwhelming power of Greek dramatic art that our pleasure and interest in it grows in spite of such a convention as scholars have been wont to assume.









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